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REPORT ON THE
NAVAL INVESTIGATION

BY THE

SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE
COMMITTEE ON NAVAL AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES SENATE

PRINTED FOR THE USE OF THE
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NAVAL INVESTIGATION.

REPORT OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE COMMITTEE ON NAVAL AFFAIRS, UNITED STATES SENATE.

Mr. HALE, from the Subcommittee on Naval Affairs, submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany ———.]

SECTION I.

INTRODUCTORY.

During the course of a public hearing before the Senate Subcommittee on Naval Affairs on January 17, 1920, Rear Admiral William S. Sims, at the request of the chairman, read the following letter which he had addressed to the Secretary of the Navy, under date of January 7, 1920, as bearing on "Certain naval lessons of the Great War" and of the existence of which letter there was public rumor:

JANUARY 7, 1920.

From: Rear Admiral William S. Sims, United States Navy.
To: The Secretary of the Navy.
Subject: Certain naval lessons of the Great War.

1. Upon the conclusion of a war in which large naval forces have been engaged, and after a sufficient time has elapsed to permit of a careful estimate of the manner in which the war was conducted, it is of the first importance that the lessons to be derived from this experience be recorded in order that they may serve as a guide in future wars.

2. This is especially true of a naval war of such a peculiar character that the experience of former wars was of little assistance in determining the proper policy and in developing the unusual tactics that were rendered necessary by the number, geographical position, and resources of the countries involved, and by the enemy's method of submarine attack upon merchant shipping in disregard of the tenets of international law and the laws of humanity.

3. In this respect it is particularly important that a just estimate be made of the errors of policy, tactics, strategy, and administration that were committed by our Navy.

4. It is to this end that I submit the following account of what appears to me to be the most serious of these errors, and the circumstances that led up to them, followed by a brief summary of the lessons to be derived therefrom.

5. This is not presented solely from the viewpoint of the commander of our relatively small naval forces in Europe, but specifically as a result of the experience necessarily gained in the unusual and very responsible position of the Navy Department's representative in the naval council of the Allies, where only all allied plans and policies

could be continuously discussed, and where only all essential information, both current and general, was at all times available.

6. In the latter part of March, 1917, in response to a request from the American ambassador in London, expressing the desire of the British Government that a naval officer of high rank be sent to secure the closer cooperation which our Navy Department had suggested, I was ordered abroad on barely 48 hours' notice.

7. Brief orders were delivered to me verbally in Washington. No formal instructions or statement of the Navy Department's plans or policy were received at that time, though I received the following explicit admonition: "Don't let the British pull the wool over your eyes. It is none of our business pulling their chestnuts out of the fire. We would as soon fight the British as the Germans."

8. I assumed that my mission was to confer with the heads of the allied navies to learn the actual situation and to discuss means for naval cooperation in case the United States declared war against the Central Powers. A lieutenant commander accompanied me as aid. We were directed not to take uniform and to travel under assumed names; I expected to return and supplement my cables by reporting the situation in person. I had no idea that I would be designated to command the naval forces in Europe in case of war.

9. I arrived in Liverpool on April 9, and in London on April 10, 1917, and went immediately to the admiralty, where the naval situation was fully explained by the responsible officials. This explanation showed that the Navy Department did not understand the seriousness of the submarine situation; that its information was very incomplete and inaccurate. This was due to the insufficient scope of its intelligence service, very few naval officers having been sent to Europe for information before we entered the war.

10. A review of the cables sent to the department in April, 1917, shows that the situation was very serious, and that the enemy was rapidly winning the war by destruction of merchant shipping. Throughout the following year numerous cables and letters of the most urgent possible character were sent with the object of impressing upon the department the vital necessity of our maximum effort being exerted in the European waters with the least possible delay, but without producing the desired results.

11. Attention was frequently invited to the fact that shipping was being sunk much faster than it was being built, and that it was a matter of simple arithmetical calculation to determine when the Allies would have to sue for peace if the rate of loss continued.

12. It may be well to state here that the delays in taking action, and the lack of support, involving the efficiency of the United States naval assistance in the war can be fully understood only through an examination of the communications exchanged between the department and the naval headquarters abroad.

13. For some reason which has never been explained the Navy Department, during at least the first six months of the war, failed to put into actual practice a wholehearted policy of cooperation with the Allies—the policy required for winning the war with the least possible delay.

14. The headquarters in Europe was not infrequently left in ignorance of the department's policies, plans for operation of United States forces, and its intended action upon my many dispatches. Nor until July 10, 1917, did the Navy Department outline a policy as regards naval cooperation with the Allies, in a cable quoting a letter to the State Department.

15. As usual in such cases, the policy thus set forth was academically sound, but that it was not carried out or was not understood by the department is shown by the fact that for 10 months after its receipt I was still urgently recommending an increase of forces—still trying to convince the department that the war was in the eastern Atlantic; that the United States naval "front" was off the European coast and not off the United States coast; that it was there only that the naval enemy was operating; that it was there only that United States shipping, let alone allied shipping, could be protected with the maximum efficiency.

16. A review of the dispatches makes it apparent that the department did not accept my reports and recommendations with the seriousness that the critical situation demanded. There are many instances that illustrate this. One that may be cited is the case of our battleships that were requested as reinforcement of the Grand Fleet.

17. Following a conference with Admiral Jellicoe, then first sea lord, or "chief of naval operations," of the British Admiralty, and Admiral Beatty, the commander in chief of the Grand Fleet, it was strongly recommended, on July 21, 1917, that four of our coal-burning battleships be sent at once. There was great delay before there was even an acknowledgment of this request. This naturally subjected me to much embarrassment. The request, though repeated, was finally refused.

18. In the following November the chief of naval operations arrived in England with the Col. House mission. After discussing this question of the necessity of sending our battleships, with the same officials with whom I had discussed it, he cabled at once recommending that they be sent. The result was that it was over four months after the original request (November 28), that the four ships sailed from the United States.

19. This is but one of a number of examples of a similar kind and strikingly illustrates the nature of the delays caused by the department's insistence upon trying to understand the intricate details of rapidly changing conditions 3,000 miles away. As it was, of course, a physical impossibility to keep the department fully and accurately informed, and as the department insisted upon making decisions concerning both the disposition and the actual operations of the European forces, the inevitable result was unsound decisions and, in some cases, long delays before the department was induced to accept the original recommendations that were based upon exhaustive discussions of the actual conditions with the heads of the allied navies.

20. Judging from the actions that were finally taken, after extensive cabled and written communications, and consequently long delays, it is apparent that if I could have appeared daily in Washington to explain fully my recommendations and the discussions before the conferences upon which they were based, they would undoubtedly have been carried out from two to six months earlier. The point is that if the department considered that there was anyone in Washington more competent to form such conclusions, he should have been sent to Europe for that purpose; but, failing this, the recommendations of the Navy Department's representative, based upon conferences with the allied commanders, should have been accepted and immediately acted upon. The action of the department in this respect was a violation of a fundamental principle of warfare (see Mahan, or any authority), and it was continuous throughout the war. It added greatly to the burden of my work.

21. There was great delay and reluctance in accepting the indisputable fact, which should have been apparent to anyone, that the critical sea area was in the eastern Atlantic in the so-called submarine war zone; that the submarine campaign could be critical and could affect the ultimate decision of the war only in that area.

22. This attitude in Washington greatly slowed the sending of the necessary assistance, and necessarily resulted in prolonging the war.

23. It would seem to be self-evident that the department could not possibly have been kept completely informed in detail, by cable code messages, of the actual situation in the war zone, and, particularly, of the rapidly changing conditions during the critical period of the war in the summer of 1917.

24. As a matter of fact this was a physical impossibility during all of that most critical period. The work of collecting the necessary information, or even the purely mechanical work of transcribing it, would have been away beyond the physical capacity of one man assisted by the one aid I was allowed during that time. The best that could possibly be done was to keep the department informed by cable in a general way of the conclusions reached by the various discussions with the allied commanders at the "front," and of the decisions based thereon.

25. In cases where the department declined to approve such decisions, the only recourse was to try to explain by letter, as fully as time and insufficient assistance would permit. The result was, of course, long, embarrassing, and dangerous delays.

26. If the department had promptly accepted the recommendations made, beginning four days after my arrival abroad and continuing for some months, and had sent at once all the destroyers and other craft which were finally sent in the next four or five months, it follows that the United States naval intervention would have been much more efficient.

27. I realize that it is difficult at the present time to believe that any policy involving such delays could have been persisted in, particularly when combined with a failure to comply with my requests for additional staff officers to assist my one aid; but a review of the dispatches and letters exchanged with the department during this period (the first four months of the war) will show that the department insisted upon the impossible; that is, upon full and detailed substantiation of every proposition advanced, even many of those concerning the disposition and handling of the naval forces in actual contact with the enemy.

28. For example, in the above-mentioned statement of policy, from the Navy to the State Department, a copy of which was sent me, it is clearly set forth that readiness completely to cooperate by sending our light forces abroad was dependent upon the condition that the Allies should keep the department fully informed through me of their plans and intentions.

29. In other words, while the department's first statement of policy (which was dated July, 1917, or three months after we entered the war) was what I had recom-

mended since the beginning, it nevertheless withheld putting it into effect, apparently because of a conviction that the Allies were not keeping it fully informed of their plans.

30. The truth of the matter was that nothing was being withheld, and that all policies and plans which were in writing, which were actually of an official nature and which in any way affected United States naval cooperation, had been transmitted to the department as completely as long-distance communication—code messages—permitted.

31. Certain suggestions were made by the British Admiralty as to uses of our forces in the campaign. For example, in April, 1917, there was anxiety lest the enemy should attempt a raid in the Channel with a heavy force and get away before he could be intercepted by a force from the Grand Fleet, the nearest base of which was at Rosyth, near Edinburgh. Accordingly, the Admiralty suggested that a squadron of our battleships be based on Brest or in the Channel. No reply was made to this suggestion. Also, the value of submarines in the campaign was first explained April 10, 1917. None were sent until October, 1917, when five arrived in Ireland, followed by seven more in January and February, 1918.

32. In spite of the numerous messages sent in April, the only information received up to April 27, 1917, was that six destroyers only would be sent. The situation was then so very critical that I appealed to the American ambassador in London, who sent a most urgent message to the President, and on May 3, 1917, the first definite information was received of the department's intention to send more than six destroyers—that ultimately 36 and 2 repair ships would be sent.

33. Most earnest requests were made for tugs because of the urgent need for them in the submarine zone. These requests fully explained how many torpedoed ships could have been beached and salvaged if these tugs had been available. Experience has shown that such vessels could be repaired and put in service again in a short time—a very short time compared to that required to build new ships—thus resulting in a great saving of tonnage.

34. A year after we entered the war but four tugs had been sent, and two of these were specifically allocated to Italy by the department. Nine more were eventually sent at various times; but none before April 23, 1918.

35. The department caused serious embarrassment and delays in putting into effect the convoy system which was the most important of all the measures used in defeating the submarine war against allied shipping.

36. The department was repeatedly assured that the Allies at all times had remarkably accurate information as to the movement of submarines, and that it was practically certain that they could not reach our coast, or even leave European waters, without advance information being supplied. Subsequent events proved this assurance to be correct.

37. No submarines visited our coast until May, 1918, and the department was in all cases informed when they started across, and often as to their exact destination—where they were to lay mines, etc.

38. My dispatches show that with all possible emphasis I tried to induce the department to view the campaign as a whole; to consider our naval forces as but one relatively small item of an allied naval team; that our mission was the protection of all allied lines of communication and not the United States lines of communication alone; that, particularly in the early part of our campaign, the strictly United States lines of communication, as compared to allied lines, were inconsiderable; and that it was quite possible to give our relatively small commerce quite superior protection at the expense of losing the war by denying essential protection to the vastly greater allied commerce upon which the success of our common cause chiefly depended.

39. There was naturally a strong inclination on the part of the various powers, including the United States, to resist this policy in favor of a disposition of forces that would afford superior protection to their respective commercial vessels.

40. War is always a dangerous game. Military operations conducted by several allied powers should never be based upon a policy of "safety first" as regards the interests of any particular ally. This is especially true where success depends upon the maximum possible protection being given to the allied commerce as a whole.

41. As the possession of adequate shipping was an imperative requirement in this war, it follows that the essential policy was to pool all antisubmarine forces and use them to the best possible advantage for the protection of all shipping, regardless of the flag that it happened to be under. As the winning of the war was the paramount object, and as our antisubmarine forces and those of the Allies were always inadequate, and as it was consequently impossible to prevent a certain amount of loss, it is apparent that the game was to reduce the combined loss of allied shipping below

a point which would defeat the objective of the enemy and thus insure victory of the common cause as a whole.

42. It was repeatedly explained that if we could actually entice the enemy into shifting his submarines to our coast it would be greatly to the advantage of the common cause, even granting that our shipping would suffer somewhat more severely; that the chances of the enemy shifting any of his operations to the United States coast without our having advance knowledge, while remote, was a fully justifiable risk, and therefore that such consideration should not deter us in any way from throwing every possible bit of naval strength into the fight on the actual "front;" that is, in the "war zone" in European waters. Moreover, that the risk was slight, as vessels could be sent back, if necessary, before submarines could reach our coast or could do much damage. In making long passages submarines necessarily steam at slow speed—from 5 to 6 knots.

43. Submarines attacked almost exclusively merchant vessels, thus cutting off supplies essential to the armies. This was their correct mission, and they wisely avoided conflict with allied naval vessels. It was, therefore, our mission to adopt such tactics as to force the submarines into contact with the Allies' military vessels, while protecting the merchant shipping. This meant antisubmarine craft in such numbers that the submarines could not reach their prey without encountering them. It was for this reason that it was continuously urged that everything be sent, not only destroyers, which are preeminently the best antisubmarine craft, but also yachts, gunboats, tugs, etc., in fact, any craft that could steam across the ocean or be towed across.

44. It is quite true that there were many naval activities outside of the eastern Atlantic, such as in Caribbean, south Atlantic, Pacific, and Asiatic waters. But, considering the rapidity with which at the time in question we were losing the war in the submarine zone, these forces were of little importance—practically none as regards ultimate success. A great deal of unnecessary effort was expended in these areas. It was repeatedly pointed out that we could afford to lose some antisubmarine craft, but could not afford to continue the loss of merchantmen at the rate then being sustained.

45. It was realized, of course, that if a considerable number of antisubmarine vessels was not kept on our coast there would be risk of public criticism which, in time of war, must be based upon inadequate information, because to inform the public would be to inform the enemy. But I strongly advised that this risk be accepted; that we should not be influenced in our war measures by the possibility of such adverse criticism; that the situation made it imperative that every possible means be used to defeat the enemy as speedily as possible, regardless of other considerations, and thus save many valuable lives.

46. Perhaps the most remarkable situation disclosed by the correspondence with the department is that during the most critical period—the first four months after we entered the war—I had but one aid, and that for more than the first year I had a wholly inadequate staff.

47. With all the insistence possible it was explained, in numerous cables and letters, for four weary and anxious months, the absolute necessity of further assistance in order to handle the situation effectively, but only to receive always the same answer, namely, that officers were "not available."

48. Finally, in July, 1917, my only aid was unable longer to support the continuous strain of the past four months' work, including the very anxious task of planning for and handling the troop convoys then arriving. And it was only after this fact had been cabled that three officers were sent out, though the department still declined to provide the adequate staff that had been requested, with full explanations of the types of officers required and the necessity for each. I urged the department to give me at least the staff that the commander of one flotilla of destroyers would have in time of peace. But all in vain.

49. As it gradually became apparent that support in this matter need not be expected, I began slowly building up a staff by detaching officers from some of the ships. This was, of course, regrettable, as many of the ships were at that time short of officers; but it was necessary, on pain of the whole force becoming ineffective through the rapidly growing and essential administrative work getting beyond the capacity of the headquarters force. Ultimately this force consisted of about 60 regular and 140 reserve officers and 1,000 enlisted men and clerical force for the administration, supply, and operation of widely dispersed forces of about 370 ships of all classes, 5,000 officers, and 75,000 men. Its necessity was finally, I believe, tacitly recognized by the department, but not until near the end of the war, when a few officers were sent for staff duty. If it had been recognized from the beginning, as well as the necessity of sending all possible antisubmarine forces, there can be no doubt that the end of the

war would have been hastened and hundreds of thousands of tons of shipping and many lives would have been saved.

50. It needs little explanation to understand what I and my single aid were up against. For the efficient handling of such a difficult and complicated situation I should have had a staff capable of:

(1) Obtaining complete information of the various phases of the naval campaign which had been in operation for over two years.

(2) Keeping up to date with the developments which were rapidly changing almost from day to day.

(3) Efficiently administering, supplying, and operating the entire force.

(4) Coordinating our work with that of the Allies.

51. The work of such a staff not only involved attempting to survey the disposition of all enemy forces, but also of all allied forces operating in the North Sea, Atlantic, and Mediterranean. It was also necessary to keep track of the results of the naval campaign in all its details both from the side of the Allies and from that of the enemy, and to solve the problems of supply, repairs, etc., which would affect any United States naval forces that might be sent abroad. The above, to say nothing of having to solve problems relating to the entirely new forces introduced into this war, such as aviation, a tremendous problem in itself.

52. It would take many pages to set forth all the activities and information which were to be studied and reports of which, of course, could have been transmitted to the department if the staff had been adequate.

53. If the department realized these conditions, it is made clear by the records that it was not influenced by them. The correspondence shows that I was trying to get the department to understand that I was confronted with an impossible task; that it was actually physically impossible for me and one aid to carry on efficiently the necessary operations of the forces, let alone comply with the department's demands for the details of information concerning all the various plans of the Allies, the details of all methods and appliances used, etc. All this not to mention the details required concerning new construction, new types of vessels, new methods of gunfire, etc.

54. In a word, it would hardly be possible to conceive of a more complete misunderstanding by the department of the actual situation that confronted me on the other side, particularly during the critical period of the war.

55. On a number of occasions I invited the department's attention to the fact that it was impossible intelligently to direct the operation of our forces from Washington; that if we were to cooperate with the allied navies, which was the only efficient way of participating in the war, it was essential that we keep in close personal touch with the heads of the allied navies in the war area.

56. To this end it was pointed out that our organization abroad should be considered as the department's advance headquarters in the field, similar to the general headquarters of the Army in the field; that the personnel of the organization at these advance headquarters should be more than adequate rather than inadequate, in order to avoid the great danger of basing the Navy's part in the war upon incomplete information.

57. When Gen. Pershing arrived in Europe in May, 1917, he was accompanied by a nucleus staff, consisting of 5 colonels, 6 lieutenant colonels, 16 majors, 18 captains, and 8 lieutenants, or 53 commissioned officers in all, besides many writers and orderlies. Ultimately this staff was expanded to about 1,500 commissioned officers.

58. As was repeatedly pointed out, such was the necessity for an adequate organization abroad that the term "not available" should have been applied to other activities of vastly less importance, that the headquarters organization abroad, as well as that in Washington, should be adequate, even if it meant laying up a couple of old ships, especially those of a class which could not possibly be used in the war.

59. The policy indicated by the dispatches in question may be summed up by the statement that ships as well as troops in the field, no matter what their individual skill, would be very heavily handicapped if their combined efforts were not coordinated and directed from the most central source of all available information.

60. The department frequently omitted to keep its naval representatives abroad informed of its plans, intentions, and sometimes even the movements of forces in the European area, and there was at times embarrassment caused by lack of general information concerning the Navy's activities in other areas, such as the South Atlantic, Pacific, etc. As foreign forces and shipping were also operating in those areas, it was embarrassing not to be able to answer in conference with the Allies all questions concerning our actual naval activities as well as prospective plans, the carrying out of which would necessarily influence allied plans.

61. It requires little imagination to understand the great embarrassment of my position. It was, of course, impossible even to attempt any explanation of the evident fact that the Allies were not receiving the easily possible naval support in ships and that I was not receiving adequate assistance in personnel.

62. Apart from the resulting lack of coordination, it was very difficult—I fear sometimes impossible—to avoid the impression conveyed thereby to the heads of the allied navies that I was not being supported or was not in the confidence of the department.

63. Delays and confusion were caused by the department's dealing directly from Washington with European naval officials in Europe without using its own representatives there to investigate conditions at the "front," discuss all details with the allied navies, and thus coordinate effort.

64. For example, on May 8, without previous explanation, the department announced its intention to establish naval bases at Bordeaux and Brest, although on May 5, it had been informed of the results of a conference with the French naval authorities and their agreement that our forces should remain concentrated at that time in the area of greatest enemy activity.

65. Delays and confusion were also caused by dealing with representatives of foreign countries stationed in America, who made independent and strenuous demands for ships, coal, and other supplies, etc., without reference to the demands or necessities of others. The department thus ignored its own representative, who was manifestly abroad for the paramount purpose of investigating the details of all such requests and determining after conferences with the allied navies their relative merits, and particularly their relation to the necessities of the antisubmarine campaign.

66. I realized, of course, that a correct policy would have placed a heavy responsibility upon me, but as it was impossible to decide such questions efficiently and rapidly without access to all the information and without opportunity for personal conferences, either this policy should have been adopted or else the person or persons in Washington assumed to be competent to decide such matters from a distance should have been transferred permanently to headquarters in Europe where personal contact, all available information, and continuous conferences would have been possible.

67. It is essential clearly to understand the vital importance of continuous conference with those officials of the allied navies and Governments who were directly concerned that nothing should be neglected to render decisions sound.

68. In many cases such was the mass of details involved in a decision—not only the details of the actual situation, but those based upon actual experience in similar cases and discussed at former conferences—that it was, of course, impossible for officers sent abroad to attend special conferences to acquire this information in time to make use of it. The almost inevitable result in such cases would be unsound opinions presented by them at the conferences.

69. There was insistence by the department upon finding new naval plans—a royal road to victory—such as blocking the enemy in his ports. The objection to radically new plans was that the situation was critical and their preparation would delay striking quickly with all available forces. This insistence assumed that the department, incompletely informed as it necessarily was, and without previous experience in the war, was more competent to decide upon practicable plans than their own representative in continuous conference with the leaders of the allied navies who had had nearly three years' experience. This attitude was maintained until after the commander in chief of the Atlantic Fleet and the Chief of Naval Operations had visited Europe and learned something of the situation.

70. During the first year of the war the department refused to permit me to enroll in the Naval Reserve capable Americans who had special knowledge and who offered their services. Many of these men possessed special European experience which could not be obtained at home. Some of them felt so impelled to do their part that they actually returned to the United States in order that they might be enrolled there.

71. Throughout the war the department refused to trust to my discretion in the promotion of reserve officers, both for gallantry in action with the enemy and for conspicuous ability. Many of these officers were performing services the value of which was out of all proportion to the rank they held, and were far junior to the corresponding officers of allied services with whom they necessarily worked.

72. This was not only a grave injustice to these fine men, but the policy deprived me of the great advantage of increasing the morale of my forces by prompt rewards, instead of obliging me to assume the attitude of indifference to their demonstrated merits, thus inevitably decreasing their morale.

73. These officers for the most part did not care for the increase of pay, but it was a serious handicap, as well as an embarrassment, not to have the insignia correspond-

ing to their age, experience, and the services they were actually performing, and corresponding to those of the foreign officers with whom they were officially associated.

74. At no time during the war was I permitted to select my subordinate flag commanders and but very few of my other subordinates.

75. Efficiency in war depends so much upon complete mutual confidence and sympathy between subordinates and their superiors, that it seems hardly necessary to state that I should at least have been consulted as to these important assignments and, of course, held responsible for the results attained.

76. In the course of time, in the ninth month after our entry into the war, the lack of support referred to above, particularly in respect of the lack of adequate personnel for necessary staff duties abroad, became known in Washington. This was brought to my attention by the following cable messages:

DECEMBER 22, 1917.

From: The Secretary of the Navy.
To: Vice Admiral Sims, London.

1732. At House committee hearing of conduct of Navy, Representative Britten said, "I would like to have copy of complaints which have come from Admiral Sims on the other side." If you desire to make statement of action of department in reference to sending and supplying force under your command since war began, please send in code.

DANIELS.

DECEMBER 22, 1917.

From: The Chief of Naval Operations.
To: Vice Admiral Sims, London.

Effort being made to credit impression you have been hampered by failure of Navy Department to meet your request for various things, particularly personnel. I feel that a strong positive statement on this subject from you is highly desirable.

BENSON.

77. I was thus confronted with a situation, not uncommon in warfare, that demanded a decision that no military commander should hesitate to make; that is, such a decision as would be most likely, while avoiding conflict, to advance the common cause through the loyal support of superior authority by making the best of existing conditions, no matter how unsatisfactory. As the subject was one the public discussion of which in Congress would have supplied valuable information to the enemy, not to mention increasing his morale and decreasing that of our own fighting forces, it was manifestly desirable that it should be discouraged and particularly that no information should be supplied that would render the discussion inevitable. The following cablegram was therefore designed to accomplish this purpose:

DECEMBER 23, 1917.

From: Vice Admiral Sims.
To: The Secretary of the Navy.

2366. Your 1732. I strongly deprecate any effort to create an impression that our naval forces in European waters have been avoidably hampered by failure of the Navy Department to comply with my recommendations for various things, particularly personnel.

It is of course well known that the antisubmarine campaign and the protection of allied shipping have been and still are hampered to a considerable extent by insufficient numbers of certain types of vessels, especially destroyers, and by certain classes of personnel, and I have repeatedly made recommendations in accordance with the requirements on this situation. To these recommendations the department has always responded with the assurance that reinforcements of both vessels and personnel were being sent to the maximum extent consistent with the many other requirements of the department in these respects.

The decision as to the relative importance of the employment of our naval vessels and personnel in the theater of actual war operations in European waters and at home must necessarily rest with the department, and I consider it the first duty of those at the front loyally to accept such decisions and to make the best of conditions which are at present admittedly unsatisfactory and must so remain until the energetic measures now being taken to increase our antisubmarine forces produce the necessary reinforcements.

SIMS.

78. The above brief account of the manner in which our naval operations were conducted clearly shows that the following grave errors were committed in violation of

fundamental military principles; and it is manifestly desirable that such violations should be avoided in future.

(1) Although war with Germany had been imminent for many months prior to its declaration, there were, nevertheless, no mature plans developed or naval policy adopted in preparation for war, in so far as its commander in Europe was informed.

(2) The Navy Department did not announce a policy until three months after war was declared—at least, not to its representative and the commander of its forces in Europe.

(3) The Navy Department did not enter whole-heartedly into the campaign for many months after we declared war, thus putting a great strain upon the morale of the fighting forces in the war area by decreasing their confidence in their leaders.

(4) The outbreak of hostilities found many important naval units widely dispersed and in need of repairs before they could be sent to the critical area.

Destroyers arriving in the war zone had been cruising extensively off our seaboard and in the Caribbean, and when war was declared were rushed through a brief and inadequate preparation for distant service.

(5) During the most critical months of the enemy submarine campaign against the allied lines of communication the department violated the fundamental strategical principle of concentration of maximum force in the critical area of the conflict.

(6) The department's representative with the allied admiralties was not supported during the most critical months of the war, either by the adequate personnel or by the adequate forces that could have been supplied.

(7) The department's commander in the critical area of hostilities was never allowed to select his principal subordinates and was not even consulted as to their assignment. A fundamental principle of the art of command is here involved.

(8) The Navy Department made and acted upon decisions concerning operations that were being conducted 3,000 miles away, when the conditions were such that full information could not have been in its possession; thus violating an essential precept of warfare that sound decisions necessarily depend upon complete information.

(9) Instead of relying upon the judgment of those who had had actual war experience in this peculiar warfare, the Navy Department, though lacking not only this experience but also lacking adequate information concerning it, insisted upon a number of plans that could not be carried out.

(10) Many of the department's actions so strongly implied a conviction that it was the most competent to make decisions concerning operations in the war zone that the result was an impression that it lacked confidence in the judgment of its representatives on the council of the Allies and its responsible commander in the "field."

It is a fundamental principle that every action on the part of superior authorities should indicate confidence in subordinates. If such confidence is lacking, it should immediately be restored by ruthlessly changing the subordinate.

(11) "To interfere with the commander in the field or afloat is one of the most common temptations to the Government—and is generally disastrous." (The Influence of Sea Power upon History, Mahan.)

The Navy Department did not resist this temptation, and its frequent violation of this principle was the most dangerous error committed during the naval war.

WM. S. SIMS.

The text of this letter having been brought out in a public hearing, the chairman laid the matter before the full Senate Committee on Naval Affairs, and the committee at a meeting held on January 19, 1920, adopted the following resolution:

That the subcommittee heretofore appointed to investigate the matter of awards made by the Navy Department for distinguished and heroic services be, and it hereby is, authorized and directed, on making its report on the matter referred to, to investigate and report on the matters referred to in the letter of Admiral Sims to the Navy Department in criticism of its action touching operations during the war, introduced before the Senate committee.

Pursuant to this authority, the subcommittee, between March 9 and May 28, 1920, held 67 public sessions, heard 22 witnesses, and took about 3,300 printed pages of testimony, all witnesses being put under oath.

PURPOSES OF THE INVESTIGATION.

It has seemed to the subcommittee that the purposes of the naval investigation held by the subcommittee should be to examine into the allegations made by Rear Admiral Sims in his letter of January 7, 1920, to the Secretary of the Navy, to learn such naval lessons as could be adduced from the experience of our naval participation in the Great War, and from them to make such recommendations as might be found advisable.

SITUATION IN EUROPE IN 1917.

Before entering on a treatment of the evidence heard it might be well to outline the situation in Europe in 1917. The following is quoted from the final report of Gen. John J. Pershing, commander in chief American Expeditionary Forces, page 7:

SPRING OF 1917.

7. Retaining on the eastern front the forces considered sufficient for the final conquest of Russia, Germany prepared to aid Austria in an offensive against Italy. Meanwhile, the Russian revolution was well under way and, by the midsummer of 1917 the final collapse of that Government was almost certain.

The relatively low strength of the German forces on the western front led the Allies with much confidence to attempt a decision on this front; but the losses were very heavy and the effort signally failed. The failure caused a serious reaction, especially on French morale, both in the army and throughout the country, and attempts to carry out extensive or combined operations were indefinitely suspended.

In the five months ending June 30, German submarines had accomplished the destruction of more than three and one-quarter million tons of allied shipping. During three years Germany had seen practically all her offensives except Verdun crowned with success. Her battle lines were held on foreign soil and she had withstood every allied attack since the Marne. The German general staff could now foresee the complete elimination of Russia, the possibility of defeating Italy before the end of the year and, finally, the campaign of 1918 against the French and British on the western front which might terminate the war.

It can not be said that German hopes of final victory were extravagant, either as viewed at that time or as viewed in the light of history. Financial problems of the Allies were difficult, supplies were becoming exhausted, and their armies had suffered tremendous losses. Discouragement existed not only among the civil population, but throughout the armies as well. Such was the allied morale that, although their superiority on the western front during the last half of 1916 and during 1917 amounted to 20 per cent, only local attacks could be undertaken and their effect proved wholly insufficient against the German defense. Allied resources in man power at home were low and there was little prospect of materially increasing their armed strength, even in the face of the probability of having practically the whole military strength of the Central Powers against them in the spring of 1918.

8. This was the state of affairs that existed when we entered the war. While our action gave the Allies much encouragement, yet this was temporary, and a review of conditions made it apparent that America must make a supreme material effort as soon as possible. After duly considering the tonnage possibilities, I cabled the following to Washington on July 6, 1917:

"Plans should contemplate sending over at least 1,000,000 men by next May."

Irrespective of what might have been the possibilities of a favorable decision elsewhere at some earlier date, in the spring of 1917 it had become fairly evident that the final decision would be made on the western front. There a static equilibrium existed, with the power of the Allies tending to wane, while that of the Central Powers was being increased by the weakening of allied pressure on other fronts. And in several other respects the Allies were disadvantageously

circumstanced. The Central Empires had the strategic advantages of "interior lines," which "conveys the meaning that from a central position one can assemble more rapidly on either of two opposite fronts than the enemy can, and therefore utilize force more effectively. * * * Briefly, interior lines are lines shorter in time than those the enemy can use." [1] And our enemies not only had the interior lines; but, excepting across the well protected Bosphorus, all their lines were on land, and so inaccessible to direct naval attack. The lines of the Allies by contrast were almost all exterior lines and between different bases and fronts, interrupted by such maritime links as the English Channel, the passage from the Chops of the Channel to the Gulf of Genoa, the passage from Marseille to Saloniki or Asia Minor, not to mention the long lines from Canada and South Africa and Australasia.

While the maritime blockade of the Central Empires was of great military value to the Allies, still the Central Empires were largely self-sustaining. By contrast, the Allies, with their exterior and maritime lines, were not self-sustaining and were dependent to a great and vital extent on supplies and sustenance from North and South America, from Asia, South Africa, and Australasia. The support of the western front where the decision would be made—and the support of all minor fronts—was therefore dependent on adequate maritime transport.

In previous wars where one or both belligerents were more or less dependent on maritime transport, the naval command of the surface of the sea has determined the issue. And in the Great War, from the outset the Allies, mainly by the British Fleet, had obtained the naval command of the surface of the high seas, driving the German and Austrian fleets, and their merchant shipping, into port and opening safe maritime transport for the Allies throughout the world except in the Baltic, Adriatic, Sea of Marmora, and Black Sea.

Then it was that the Central Empires, their fleets driven from the surface of the seas, dropped to the subsurface and turned their submarines against the merchant shipping, first of the Allies and then of neutrals. Here it should be realized that while naval fleets sometimes attack land positions—and this rarely with success—their preeminent function is to obtain and maintain control of the maritime lines of communications; to throw the high seas open as lines of communication for the safe use of their own military and merchant shipping and to close the seas to such use by the enemy. This the fleets of the Allies did until the Central Empires turned their submarines against merchant shipping. Then, in 1915, the vital maritime lines of communication of the Allies began to be threatened in an entirely new way, and their naval forces were called upon to perform two functions, novel to naval warfare, to protect merchant ships from submarine attack and to develop an effective counter-attack against submarines cruising not against naval vessels but against merchant shipping.

Supposedly the more important objective of the Central Empire submarines was to harass the maritime lines of communication over which passed troopships and military supplies, such as munitions and fuel oil. But no especial discrimination seems to have been

[1] Mahan, Naval Strategy, p. 31.

shown between such attacks and attacks on merchantmen carrying food and other supplies to the civil populations of Great Britain, France, and Italy. And it will be recalled that it was because of these indiscriminate attacks against all kinds of allied and neutral cargo and passenger merchantmen, without warning, visit, or search, that the United States declared that Germany was carrying on a state of war against us.

As the power of the Allies on the crucial and determining western front was directly dependent on transmaritime supplies for the French army and sustenance for the French people which supported it and on transmaritime supplies for the British Army and sustenance for the peoples of Great Britain who supported it, it became evident that if these supplies and sustenance, or any considerable part of either, could be cut down below the minimum rate of essential consumptions, the military collapse of the Allies on the western front must follow in due time. If direct or indirect essential supplies of food, raw materials, munitions, and manpower to France could be curtailed below that necessary to maintain the bare equilibrium on the western front, victory would be assured to Germany. In these circumstances and with the unrestricted use of the submarine as a weapon against merchant shipping, it was evident that the island of Great Britain was the most exposed point of attack; for not only was it entirely devoid of land communications, but it was the country producing the smallest proportion of the food it consumed; it was the great war materials factory and it was the banker of the Allies. But, it should be borne in mind that the more the submarine campaign developed the more apparent did it become that the objective of the submarines was more to destroy tonnage than to sink the immediate cargoes it carried. And as Great Britain was the great focus of tonnage, British waters were the best hunting grounds for would-be tonnage destroyers.

THE SUBMARINE CAMPAIGN AGAINST TONNAGE.

During the last six months of 1916, and because of submarine warfare, restricted though it still was, the world's losses of shipping tonnage already were increasing more rapidly than was the world's production of new tonnage and averaged nearly 292,000 tons per month. As by high freight rates and other means practically the whole world's shipping had been marshaled in the task of maintaining the supply of military and civil essentials to the Allies and was barely keeping abreast of the task, the shrinkage in the total tonnage of the world during the second half of 1916 because of submarine operations was patent warning that the support of the western front (and of the secondary fronts) was being seriously threatened. And it is to be presumed that under these circumstances, with their civilian populations sharply rationed, the Allies' navies were doing all in their power to check the work of the submarines.

It was under these circumstances that Germany ordered unrestricted submarine warfare on February 1, 1917, against all merchant shipping, enemy and neutral alike, and without warning of attack The results are shown by the following tabulation:

World losses of merchant tonnage and world output of new merchant tonnage.

	Losses.[1]	New tonnage.[1]	Net loss for each quarter.	Net gain for each quarter.	Accumulated loss since Jan. 1, 1917, at end of each quarter.
1917:					
First quarter	1,619,373	587,046	1,032,327		1,032,327
Second quarter	2,236,934	685,048	1,551,886		2,584,213
Third quarter	1,494,473	675,061	819,412		3,403,625
Fourth quarter	1,272,843	990,631	282,212		3,685,837
1918:					
First quarter	1,143,336	870,317	273,019		3,959,111
Second quarter	962,007	1,243,274		281,267	3,777,844
Third quarter	915,513	1,384,130		469,617	3,308,227

[1] Jellicoe, "Crisis of the Naval War," p. 226. See also printed testimony, p. 1494.

The above tabulation makes evident the fact that between January 1, 1917, and April 1, 1918, the unrestricted submarine campaign and other causes occasioned a net shrinkage of nearly 4,000,000 tons in the world's shipping in spite of the addition of over 3,800,000 tons of new shipping put in service during that period. It also shows that it was not until the second quarter of 1918 (actually in May) that the production of new tonnage rose abreast of and then began to exceed the sinkings. During the third and fourth quarters of 1916 the average monthly losses had been nearly 292,000 tons per month, but during the third quarter of 1918 the average monthly losses were still over 300,000 tons a month. In other words, toward the very end of the war the submarine was still more effective than it had been two years previous in the last half of 1916. But the most noteworthy fact for our present attention was the very sharp rise in losses during the first half of 1917, which averaged over 642,000 tons per month, and reached the maximum of 881,000 tons in one month. With communications strained to support the western front in 916, in the face of an average monthly loss of less than 200,000 tons per month, it was evident in the spring of 1917 that losses of over 600,000 tons per month could not long be continued without entailing first the civil collapse of the countries supporting the western front, and then its military collapse and victory for Germany.

TESTIMONY OF MR. HOOVER.

The actual situation may perhaps best be described in the words of the testimony given by Mr. Herbert Hoover at one of the sessions of the subcommittee. (See pp. 117–120, printed testimony.)

Mr. HOOVER. * * * The actual food supply in the three countries (Great Britain, France, and Italy) might be summarized in that the breadstuff supply, which was the most critical of their supplies, did not exceed three to four weeks' reserve stocks. * * *

The situation in France and Italy was rather more acute than the situation in England, and the result was, of course, to create the utmost anxiety on all sides as to the situation as a whole.

The shipping position was, roughly, that at the rate of submarine sinkings the war was at a measurable end, and that, as we know, subsequently the rate of sinking was greatly diminished, and further shipping produced, and we managed to struggle through. * * *

The CHAIRMAN. It is true that there was just about enough tonnage available in April, 1917, to supply the absolute needs of the Allies at that time?

Mr. HOOVER. * * * As I recollect, the total available mercantile tonnage for handling of supplies was somewhere in the neighborhood of 40,000,000 tons. I have not the accurate figures with me, but as I recollect we had something like 10,000,000 tons in naval and military transport, leaving somewhere about 30,000,000 tons for transportation of munitions and food supplies. That amount of tonnage would have been sufficient on the reduced supplies that resulted from the strict rationing of the allied countries and the diversion of that tonnage to North America to the shortest route (from the long route to Argentina), provided there were not also continuous losses. * * *

The CHAIRMAN. But it was a fact, was it not, that if the food supply had been cut off and the submarine blockade had been successful, in the end the Allies would have had to give in?

Mr. HOOVER. Oh, it is obvious that the war would have come to an end almost in a moment if the supplies had been cut off. The most desperate period, I might say, was between April (1917) and the following September. With September arrives the continental harvest, and that harvest supplied an available amount of food supplies in those countries. The French would have eight months', the Italians six months', and the British four months' food supplies. So that, given that, it was possible to get by until the harvest came in, then there was a period of possible relaxation. * * *

The CHAIRMAN. And while there was no failure to send sufficient food over (from North America) you have already stated that the condition was critical and that the food supply was practically on the border line, and if it had been cut off it would have done great damage?

Mr. HOOVER. The situation was dangerous almost beyond description, and the anxiety in the whole of that period (April to September, 1917) was terrific. I can not overemphasize the critical character of that position and the dangers in which the whole allied cause rested.

SUMMARY OF THE LAND AND SEA SITUATION IN 1917.

The situation during 1917 may be summarized, therefore, in the following terms: On land as between the armies there existed a state of near equilibrium. The enemy countries, though practically deprived of outside sustenance, were self-supporting. But the allied countries were not self-supporting either in military supplies or in sustenance and were dependent on overseas supplies of both. Their ability to carry on the war was directly dependent, therefore, on their ability to keep their maritime lines of communication sufficiently open and their merchant tonnage in sufficient volume to bring to their shores their essential requirements of overseas supplies and sustenance.

Since the earliest days of the war the navies of the Allies had obtained and retained the command of the surface of the seas, practically confining the enemy surface fleets within their home waters. And here it may be said parenthetically that the Battle of Jutland, at the end of May, 1916, though inconclusive in itself as a naval victory, established the preponderance of the British Grand Fleet, provided its efficiency in all essential constituents remained unimpaired. But though the command of the surface of the seas remained throughout the war with the fleets of the Allies, progressively from 1915 the enemy's submarines carried on a campaign of increasing intensity against the transmaritime lines of communication of the Allies, and eventually against all merchant tonnage thereon, allied and neutral alike, with the object of ruthlessly sinking such a proportion of the world's tonnage that there would not remain enough afloat to carry to the shores of the Allies that minimum volume of supplies and sustenance which they must receive from overseas in

order to continue to defend themselves against the military attacks of the Central Empires on land. As Mr. Hoover said: "Oh, it is obvious that the war would have come to an end almost in a moment if the supplies had been cut off"—as a result of the submarine campaign. "The situation was dangerous almost beyond description. * * * I can not overemphasize the critical character of that position and the dangers in which the whole allied cause rested" (see ante, p. 18)—between April and September, 1917, because of the submarine campaign.

THE ISSUE OF VICTORY OR DEFEAT IN 1917.

It was thus into a war situation "dangerous almost beyond description" that the United States entered on April 6, 1917, at the very beginning of the most critical naval period which lasted for the first six months of our participation, and the outcome of which critical period centered on whether the submarines could cut down allied tonnage and supplies enough to bring about the collapse of the Allies. And here the momentous alternative to success should be stated plainly and recognized frankly.

If the submarine campaign had succeeded in the summer or autumn of 1917, if the Allies had then succumbed to a victorious Germany with her fleet unimpaired and perhaps more than doubled by increments from the fleets of the Allies, then the United States, having entered the war against Germany in the previous spring, would have been left practically alone, with her military strength as yet unorganized, to face the ruthless conqueror of the collective power of the Allies. The issue, first for the Allies and the United States in association with them, and then for the United States alone, hung on the prompt defeat of the submarine campaign. Their future and our future depended on keeping up the volume of supplies landed on allied shores; on keeping up, by protection and new launchings, the volume of merchant tonnage to that essential to carry these supplies; and finally on developing some counteroffensive against the submarines which would check and thwart their campaign.

MISSION OF THE AMERICAN NAVY IN 1917.

To direct the prompt cooperation of the Navy of the United States in the joint task of downing the submarine campaign was the responsibility which fell on the shoulders of the Navy Department under the command of its Secretary on April 7, 1917. And beyond any reasonable doubt after that date the penalty of failure in that joint task would be first the defeat of the Allies and then the assault on the isolated United States by a victorious Germany. The situation illustrates the military truism that the best defensive is the offensive. We were in slight danger of raids by German submarines on our coasts. Such raids could not have brought to us a national cataclysm any more than they did to England. There was slight chance that the German High Seas Fleet would escape the British Grand Fleet in sufficient force to win a victory over our own battle fleet, if the latter were fully prepared. But there was great danger that the submarines would cause the collapse of the Allies and that then Germany, at the head of a realignment of powers, would attack us as

her one remaining enemy. That was the greatest danger to which we and the world were exposed, and the only defense against it was not mere "coast defense," but the downing of the German submarine campaign by an immediate offensive against it of as great power as possible. Our best defensive from the greater danger was a strong and instant offensive against the submarines. It was common knowledge that destroyers and submarines were the most effective enemies of the German submarines and that destroyers were the most efficient guards of merchantmen against them. It was equally well known that capital naval vessels were inefficient offensively against the submarines.

THE MAJOR CONSTITUENTS OF AN EFFICIENT NAVY.

Having seen in outline what the task before our Navy was upon our entry into the war, it may be well to form a picture of the major constituents of an efficient navy. Then, having these in mind, as well as our naval task, we may the better appraise the virtues and faults of our naval preparedness and conduct in the war.

A well organized navy may be said to comprise the following three groups:

(1) A fleet comprising adequate contingents of all types of vessels and aircraft necessary to the fighting efficiency of the whole and manned by an adequate personnel thoroughly trained to operate it.

(2) A shore establishment including docks, navy yards, and arsenals, and a trained personnel therein adequate with civilian aid to construct and maintain the fleet in material fitness for war at all times.

(3) A joint civil and military management. In the management the civil control shall indicate to the military staff such national policies as may require naval support and shall manage all nonmilitary matters. On the other hand, the military staff shall keep prepared full schedules wherein adequate fleet and shore establishments shall be called for to be used according to thoroughly prepared and maintained plans to carry out the indicated or likely policies of the nation and to meet the offensive of all possible enemies or combinations of enemies. The military staff shall also keep the Navy as a whole in readiness during peace and shall manage the fleet in war in accordance with the policies indicated by the civil control.

It will be apparent that the above specifications divide the Navy into three great sections analogous to those usual in large business undertakings; that is, operation, maintenance, and management. The fleet is analogous to the operating department of a business. The shore establishment is analogous to its maintenance department. The management, as in a business, directs both according to definite policies.

It should be observed also that in this arrangement each section is complete in itself. The fleet has unified command over both its matériel and personnel. The shore establishment has unified command over its matériel and personnel, and both the floating and shore establishments are under the command of the management.

It will be seen further that, in inverse order, the above general plan contemplates the civil control of the Navy and the civil management of all its nonmilitary affairs. It calls for the civil control to keep the

military staff advised of those national policies which may require naval support. It calls for a military staff to plan a proper floating establishment to carry out such national policies and a proper shore establishment to build and maintain the floating establishment—the fighting arm—at all times in fit fighting trim. It calls for the military staff to hold prepared full plans for the strategic and tactical direction and use of the fleet. It calls for the military preparedness of the Navy in peace and for the military management of the fleet in war, but under civil control as to policy. This section might be described as the brains of the Navy.

The second section, the shore establishment, is the department that, in accordance with schedules based on national policies, builds the material weapon of the Navy—the fleet—and keeps it in material fitness, with the aid and supplementary cooperation of such private shipyards and factories as may be desired. The shore establishment is the construction and maintenance department.

The remaining section, the fleet, is that for the operation of which in war both the management department and the maintenance department exist. It is the weapon that the brain has devised for specific national purposes. It is the weapon that the factory has built according to the purposeful specifications of the brain. It is the weapon that the brain must see is kept ready for its purposes and must direct in war. And the whole effort of the entire Navy should be bent to the proper adaptation of this weapon, the fleet, to such wars as it may have to take part in and to its proper use in such wars.

With these premises as to world conditions in 1917 and as to the composition of a Navy in mind, we may now proceed to examine first the preparedness of our Navy to enter the late war and then its conduct during the war. From these examinations our conclusions will follow.

SECTION II.

PREPAREDNESS PRIOR TO APRIL 6, 1917.

INTRODUCTORY.

The evidence shows that on August 26, 1913, Rear Admiral Fiske, who was then aid for operations, and as such was the senior naval adviser to the Secretary, wrote the latter pointing out that the Navy was neither prepared for war nor well organized for war; and that in this Admiral Fiske was supported by a memorandum compiled by the Naval War College. (See pp. 694–699, printed testimony.)

The evidence shows that on August 1, 1914, the General Board of the Navy wrote officially to the Secretary of the Navy a letter that opened as follows: (See pp. 3030–3032, printed testimony.)

G. B. No. 420–1.

NAVAL WAR COLLEGE,
Newport, R. I., August 1, 1914.

From: Senior member present.
To: Secretary of the Navy.
Subject: Withdrawal of battleships to home yards.

In view of the immediate danger of a great war in Europe, and in pursuance of its duties as laid down in paragraph R-167 (1) of the Navy Regulations, the General Board earnestly urges that the battleships be brought home, docked, and put in perfect readiness with the exception of the ships actually necessary in Caribbean and Mexican waters.

After 10 prescient paragraphs dealing with causes that might involve the United States in the war that broke out actually on that very day, this letter from the General Board to Secretary Daniels closes with the following sentence (see p. 3032, printed testimony):

We should prepare now for the situation which would thus be created.

The evidence shows also that on April 12, 1916, the Senate of the United States addressed a resolution to the Secretary of the Navy in which it called upon him for

(1) A communication dated August 3, 1914, from the General Board of the Navy warning the Navy Department of the necessity of bringing the Navy to a state of preparedness. (See p. 3029, printed testimony.)

On April 21, 1916, the Secretary of the Navy wrote to the Senate in reply and said in part (see p. 3029, printed testimony; see also S. Doc. No. 413 of the 64th Cong., 1st sess.):

We were unable to find any communication such as that described in the resolution from the General Board under date of August 3, 1914, though our files contained a letter of two days previous not bearing on the subject mentioned in your resolution.

Secretary Daniels then quoted textually in this letter of his to the Senate a letter he wrote on April 17, 1916, to Admiral Dewey, then president of the General Board, in which he asked for a copy of the communication mentioned in the Senate resolution. After this quotation Secretary Daniels quoted textually Admiral Dewey's reply of the next day in which it is stated that there is no letter of August 3, 1914, from the General Board, but there is one dated August

1, 1914, copy of which Admiral Dewey transmitted to Secretary Daniels on April 18, 1916. Secretary Daniels then having in hand a copy of the letter of August 1, 1914, from the General Board, continued to write the Senate in his letter of April 21, 1916, as follows (see p. 3030, printed testimony):

It will be noted that Admiral Dewey states the communication of August 1, 1914, "bears intimately upon our policy with regard to certain foreign powers," and that he does "not think it advisable that it should be given to the public." In view of this statement of Admiral Dewey and of the fact that the letter of August 1, 1914, does not refer to "the necessity of bringing the Navy to a state of preparedness," as stated in the resolution adopted by your body, it does not appear to be in the public interest to transmit the confidential communication of the General Board of August 1, 1914.

From the above quotations from official documents, the following conclusions seem unavoidable:

(1) That by its letter of August 1, 1914, the General Board urged Secretary Daniels to put the Navy in a state of preparedness.

(2) That by its resolution of April 12, 1916, the Senate evidenced that it was concerning itself with the subject of naval preparedness.

(3) That when the Senate was concerning itself with naval preparedness within a year of our entry into the war, Secretary Daniels concealed from the Senate the opinion of the General Board as to the need for naval preparedness.

(4) That Secretary Daniels not only concealed the General Board's opinion from the Senate but that he misled the Senate by stating specifically and repeatedly in his letter of April 21, 1916, that the General Board's letter of August 1, 1914, did *not* refer to "the necessity of bringing the Navy to a state of preparedness," whereas to urge naval preparedness was the purpose of said letter from the General Board.

The evidence further shows that early in November, 1914, Admiral Fiske wrote a letter to the Secretary in which he pointed out that general peace could not be expected for five years, that there was probability that the United States would be drawn into the war, and that the Navy was unprepared in personnel, requiring an increment of 19,600 enlisted men, that the organization of the Navy Department was ill adapted to the conduct of war, and that because of a dearth of personnel and small naval vessels the Battle Fleet was not as highly trained as it should be. Rear Admiral Fiske has testified that his diary for November 5, 1914, says:

I showed secretary paper I had written to him, stating Navy is unprepared and needs more men, more training, and a general staff. He made almost no comment on my paper, though he read it carefully.

The Secretary in his letter of April 21, 1916, to the Senate, wherein he denied that the General Board's letter urging preparedness even referred to preparedness, also denied that he had ever seen this paper from Admiral Fiske. (See pp. 732–734, 745, 3029, printed testimony.)

The testimony shows that on April 16, 1915, the Secretary was still postponing his signing of a certain administrative plan urged as the first essential step toward putting the Navy Department in better shape to conduct war and that, as Rear Admiral Fiske's diary for that date says (see p. 583, Fiske: From Midshipman to Rear Admiral):

The recommending letter was signed by (Admiral) Dewey March 13, 1915, and is similar to letter two years ago, that also was not acted on.

The testimony shows by the above and similar incidents that practically from the time when he came into office in March, 1913, throughout the ensuing three years the Secretary was persistently and officially advised of the unpreparedness of the Navy and officially urged to put it in a state of preparedness; but that he persisted in evading the issue.

PREPAREDNESS AS TO PLANS.

In the management of a navy, as in any other large and intricate undertaking, the logical procedure would seem to be first to create an organization which shall make a survey of the ends to be met and then to draw up a schedule of the facilities required to meet these ends and plans of how these facilities shall be used to accomplish the objects for the doing of which they are called together; and this rather than letting the whole organization, its facilities and their uses, be a matter of sporadic growth and extemporized manipulation.

It must be admitted frankly that the whole history of our Navy shows that, until of late, the sporadic and spontaneous procedure was usually followed. But during the last century there has been a wonderful evolution of the art of orderly management in industry, commerce, finance, government, and practically every large field of mundane work. Yet there is no evident reason why the management of our Navy should not seek to keep at least abreast of this progress as other naval managements have sought to do.

The evidence brought out the interesting fact that, from the earliest days of the administration of the Hon. Josephus Daniels as Secretary of the Navy, such eminent naval officers as the late Admiral Dewey, Rear Admiral Fiske, and other members of the General Board had advocated more systematic planning, for instance, through the medium of the administrative plan that Secretary Daniels held up for over two years. (See p. 583, Fiske: From Midshipman to Rear Admiral.)

The evidence adduced the fact that when the House Committee on Naval Affairs unanimously recommended the creation of the new office of a responsible Chief of Naval Operations (H. Rept. No. 1344, 63d Cong., 3d sess., Jan. 16, 1915) it carried the following provision. We quote from the printed transcript of the testimony (p. 718, et seq.):

> To assist this officer (the Chief of Naval Operations) in preparing general and detail plans of war, 15 officers, of and above the rank of lieutenant commander of the Navy or major of the Marine Corps, are to be assigned for this exclusive duty.
>
> * * * * * * *
>
> The subjoined statement of Rear Admiral Knight, United States Navy, in an address before the Efficiency Society of New York, sets forth the importance of this legislation:
>
> * * * * * * *
>
> "The creation of this office (Chief of Naval Operations) would provide a policy for the Navy, so far as the activities of the Navy itself are concerned, insuring unity of effort and shaping plans toward the end which we have recognized to-night as the proper end of all our efforts—preparedness for war."

The testimony continues:

Admiral FISKE. This provision was struck out on a point of order in the House. Subsequently, it was introduced into the appropriation bill again by the Senate, but with certain modifications suggested by the Secretary. As modified the provision read:

"There shall be a Chief of Naval Operations who shall be an officer on the active list of the Navy, appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, from among the officers of the line of the Navy, not below the grade of captain, for a period of four years, and who shall, under the direction of the Secretary of the Navy, be charged with the operations of the fleet and with the preparation and readiness for its use in war."

It will be noted that although this provision, as finally passed, was a tremendous boon to the Navy, yet that it omitted to supply the Chief of Naval Operations with any staff for preparing war plans. It charged him with the preparation and readiness of plans, but provided no officers for making the plans. It is true that the Secretary of the Navy could, if he so desired, order officers to Washington for doing that work; but my intention in preparing the original draft was to make the ordering of these officers to Washington mandatory, because I realized that, if it were not done, officers would probably not be ordered.

The evidence shows that no officers under the Chief of Naval Operations were put to work on drawing up plans during 1915, and that it was only in 1916 that 15 officers were assigned "to assist the Chief of Naval Operations in the performance of the duties of his office * * *," but not specifically for planning.

The evidence further shows that no planning division had been established up to March, 1917; that the first specific planning division established in the naval administration was established in the London headquarters of Admiral Sims on his initiative; that the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Benson, then sought his advice about the organization of a planning division in the Navy Department in Washington; that a tentative start was made in 1918; but that it was not until August 1, 1919, nearly nine months after the armistice, that a definite planning division was ordered. (See pp. 226–227, 679–693, printed testimony.)

The evidence shows that a general war plan for a naval duel between the German and American battle fleets in the Atlantic and Carribbean had been drawn up by the General Board. This was totally different from the actual conditions of naval warfare as they existed in 1917 with the submarine campaign as the outstanding menace. It developed further that when, at the outbreak of war, a search was made for the single alleged comprehensive plan, it could not be found. It had been lost.

The CHAIRMAN. How could a report of that kind be lost, Mr. Secretary?
The SECRETARY. Search me.

It should be understood that a comprehensive war plan must include the following preliminary studies (see pp. 2890–2891, printed testimony):

(1) Mobilization plan. (2) Organization plan. (3) Command plan. (4) Strategic plan. (5) Base plan. (6) Advance base plan. (7) Logistic plan. (8) Naval district plan.

It should be understood, further, that these preliminary studies should all be developed to harmonize for the specific war and kind of warfare to be carried out—that is, in this instance they should have been developed for antisubmarine warfare—and that they should culminate in appropriate operative plans whereby the studies are practically applied to the several elements of the Navy to which they

refer and appropriate orders issued to all elements concerned so that, on signal, every element can individually move instantly to the performance of its correct function in the opening stage of the concerted war plan; and from this stage carry on for weeks and months similarly to the procedure set out in certain war plans developed since 1919 by the planning division of our Navy.

The Secretary of the Navy showed that in November, 1915, he had directed the General Board to prepare general preliminary studies according to the eight above listed headings. But apart from general assertions made by the Secretary when testifying, the evidence did not show that any specific operative war plans, particularly for operation against submarines, had been developed, authorized, and applied to the fleet. On the contrary, the weight of evidence of many officers was to the effect that no such war plan had even been undertaken before we entered the war. (See pp. 2890–2891, 3183–3186, printed testimony.)

The Secretary of the Navy led the subcommittee to understand that the characteristic of plans and actions contemplated upon our entry into the war was that they should be bold and audacious. (See p. 2018, et seq., printed testimony.)

It would seem from the evidence of the Secretary that his bold and audacious policies culminated in the following General Board plan, so called, of February 4, 1917 (see pp. 1102–1103, printed testimony):

Steps to be taken to meet a possible condition of war with the central European powers.

On account of existing conditions the General Board recommends that the following steps be taken to meet a possible condition of war with central European powers:

1. Complete complements and allowances of all kinds, first of the A and B fleets, then of the C fleet, and naval districts.

2. Mobilize the A fleet in the lower Chesapeake and increase it immediately to the B fleet. (See Black plan.)

3. Dock and repair all ships in reserve and ordinary that will be used.

4. Arrange for the supply of fuel to the fleet and stock all fuel depots to capacity.

5. Establish additional recruiting stations and increase personnel of the Navy and Marine Corps to the total number required to supply complements for all the ships built, building, and authorized, and to maintain shore establishments and naval defense districts, including aviation service, with 10 per cent additional for casualties, as follows: Enlisted force, Navy, 150,000; marines, 30,000; officers in the proportion prescribed by law.

6. Mobilize the naval districts, including the Coast Guard and Lighthouse Services, and put patrol vessels, mine sweepers, etc., of the Atlantic coast districts on their stations; no commercial vessels to be mobilized in the Pacific coast districts at present.

7. Prepare to the utmost detail for the employment of mines along our coast as may be necessary.

8. Prepare nets and other obstructions for submarines, ready for immediate use, at the Chesapeake Capes, Delaware Capes, entrance to New York Bay, eastern entrance to Long Island Sound, Narragansett Bay, Panama Canal, and Guantanamo. Other places as their need becomes apparent. The General Board considers it of the utmost importance that net protection shall be immediately provided for the fleet during its mobilization in Chesapeake Bay.

9. Establish immediately the guards at all navy yards, magazines, radio stations, powder factories, munition plants, bases, shipbuilding yards, and naval shore utilities in accordance with the mobilization plans.

10. Reduce the force of marines in Haiti and Santo Domingo to the smallest number that can maintain order there, transferring these men to the United States to perform necessary guard duty at navy yards, magazines, radio stations, shipbuilding plants, and to form cadres for the organization of new regiments as recruits are obtained. Organize the advance-base force and complete its equipment.

11. Leave in the Caribbean a sufficient number of light cruisers to keep a lookout for submarines in those waters and for the protection of our interests there. Protect the canal and Guantanamo, as far as possible, by the use of mines, and where possible by monitors, submarines, and nets.

12. For the present use the greater part of the destroyer flotillas as patrol for submarines in the vicinity of the principal ports or entrance leading to them.

13. Base the submarines at canal, Guantanamo, and points along the coast in accordance with the black plan.

14. Rush to completion all naval vessels building or authorized; also build up the Aviation Service as rapidly as possible.

15. Guard all bays and harbors on the coast of Maine to prevent their use as bases of supply. Patrol waters of Haiti, Santo Domingo, Porto Rico, and Danish West Indies, Cuban Coast Guard service to assist in patrolling all bays and gulfs of the coast of Cuba.

16. Prepare to close entrance to all ports at night and discontinue or change such aids to navigation as may be necessary.

17. Organize a comprehensive system of intelligence service covering the whole theater of war in accordance with the plans of the Office of Naval Intelligence.

18. Take possession of all interned vessels of war of Central Powers, also take control of all commercial vessels of Central Powers now in the United States waters.

19. Place under surveillance all citizens of the Central Powers in the Navy or in Government employ in naval establishments, and remove them from positions in which they may do possible harm.

20. Arm our merchant ships for the purpose of defense.

21. In accordance with Black plan carry out the following:

a. Issue proclamation prescribing defensive sea areas and put rules in regard to them in force.

b. Issue proclamation prescribing press regulations and establishing censorship of cable and radio, including naval control of all commercial and private radio stations.

c. Issue President's order in regard to visit and search, capture, etc.

22. And, as most important, arrange, as soon as possible, plans of cooperation with the naval forces of the Allies for the joint protection of transatlantic commerce and for offensive naval operations against the common enemy.

Apparently such was the bold and audacious war schedule on which our Navy Department planned that our Navy should rush into the thick of the naval fray in Europe and down the submarine campaign there going on.

The following extract from the testimony of the Secretary on May 24 (p. 2925) is characteristic of his procedure during the several sessions at which he was examined on preparedness as to plans:

The CHAIRMAN. Perhaps, to explain the question, I might say that the purpose of it was this: My understanding of the naval situation in 1916 was the following: After the Battle of Jutland the German fleet was cooped up by the more powerful surface fleet, and its ships could not come out. They were blockaded, but the submarines were coming out all the time, and submarine warfare was being carried on in the war zone to a very great extent, and that was the principal phase of the naval warfare at that time. Now, you have told us that the plan of the department was in case we got into the war to assume an offensive. What I want to know is whether you had, on the 1st day of February, 1917, or about that time, detailed plans all prepared so that the Navy could assume the offensive in submarine warfare, and especially in areas where that submarine warfare would be carried on.

Secretary DANIELS. You are speaking, as I understand, of the Battle of Jutland——

The CHAIRMAN. Yes; but what I want information on is whether you had those plans up to the time Bernstorff was given his passports.

Secretary DANIELS. We had plans of a war with Germany in the "Black" plan, which Admiral Badger will take up with you.

The CHAIRMAN. And did these plans cover antisubmarine warfare?

Secretary DANIELS. They covered whatever warfare the General Board thought we would be likely to have to meet.

The CHAIRMAN. You do not know whether they covered antisubmarine warfare or not?

Secretary DANIELS. Those plans are confidential, and when you receive them in executive session you will see all phases that they covered.

The CHAIRMAN. I do not think there will be any question of breaking in on confidential plans for you to inform the committee whether at that time we had plans which covered the warfare against the submarine.

Secretary DANIELS. We had plans covering any possible warfare in the Atlantic or Pacific.

The CHAIRMAN. Including plans against submarines?

Secretary DANIELS. And the General Board's plans will be presented to your committee.

The CHAIRMAN. I am asking you the question whether it included submarines, because I want to ask you some general questions about that.

Secretary DANIELS. Of course, the plans covered, as I told you this morning, every possible plan; we had always said, "Consult immediately with the Allies with the view of securing the complete cooperation." You presume, in your question, that after May 1, 1916, the only possible method of warfare was the submarine warfare.

The CHAIRMAN. That was one principal kind of warfare.

Secretary DANIELS. Yes; and after the Battle of Jutland that was not then the opinion of the experts of Great Britain or the world. They were expecting and hoping for another battle, and also they were expecting always that the German cruisers would seek to come out, so that the General Board was making its plans upon the line of battleships, dreadnaughts, submarines—any kind of warfare that we might be engaged in.

The CHAIRMAN. And I asked you specifically if they did make plans for antisubmarine warfare.

Secretary DANIELS. Why, they had planned for antisubmarine warfare, dreadnaught warfare, cruiser warfare—any kind of warfare, I say.

The CHAIRMAN. Now, on page 2710 of the testimony appears the following question:

"The CHAIRMAN. Was any plan drawn up to meet the case of a war in which the United States naval forces would be used almost exclusively against submarines?

"Admiral BADGER. No," etc.

Secretary DANIELS. Used exclusively, you say?

The CHAIRMAN. Used almost exclusively against submarines.

Secretary DANIELS. Well, if Admiral Badger made you that statement, of course, that is correct.

* * * * * * *

The CHAIRMAN. Admiral Badger continued in his explanation—I simply read the "No" at the first of it, and then he explained afterwards. He said:

"No; because it was believed that we would have to do what the people abroad were doing; to follow their lead. You understand that we entered the war under this handicap, that we came in to cooperate after the others had been at war three years," etc.

Now, from your answers, am I to understand we were thoroughly prepared with plans for an antisubmarine warfare or not, Mr. Secretary?

Secretary DANIELS. We were entirely prepared with plans for any kind the naval strategists could see.

The CHAIRMAN. For antisubmarine warfare?

Secretary DANIELS. Not specifically; any kind, or every kind.

The flat statements by several officers that adequate war plans did not exist prior to our entry into into the war were borne out by the evidence, showing that in February, 1917, Capt. Harris Laning, realizing the situation, drew up some tentative plans on his own initiative; and that in March, 1917, a special board was appointed to consider them. But action putting them in operation did not ensue. Capt. W. V. Pratt, who later acted as Assistant Chief of Naval Operations, in an effort to show the existence of comprehensive war plans prior to our entry into the war, submitted as a part of his testimony a group of disjointed and undated memoranda he prepared personally between January and July, 1917. Their remoteness from a comprehensive operative war plan is apparent. (See pp. 385–396, 1268–1287, printed testimony.)

PREPAREDNESS AS TO BUILDING PROGRAM.

Before considering such measures of preparedness as to building program as may have been taken by the Navy Department between the outbreak of the Great War in August, 1914, and our entry into it in April, 1917, it might be well to recall and discuss the maritime situation as it developed.

As has been stated in effect, before the close of 1914 the fleets of the Allies had obtained practical command of the surface of the seas throughout the world excepting the Baltic, the Adriatic, the Sea of Marmora, and the Black Sea, and had confined the fleets of the Central Empires to their home waters. And the Battle of Jutland on May 31, 1916, though inconclusive, certified to this command and made it reasonably certain that there was little if any danger of the German High Seas Fleet breaking through the barrier of the British Grand Fleet in effective after-force, provided the efficiency of the Grand Fleet were maintained in all respects. The recently made public dispatches of Admiral Scheer to the German Kaiser after the Battle of Jutland emphasize this.

On the other hand, beginning early in 1915, the Central Empires developed a submarine campaign against merchant tonnage which grew to such proportions and yielded such a volume of effective results in the destruction of merchant tonnage as to give good promise that it might bring about the collapse of the Allies and result in their defeat before the close of 1917.

In other words, the Allies held the command of the surface of the seas practically from the outset. But soon after the time they made this secure, and thus made impossible an eruption of the German surface fleet onto the high seas, the Central Empires progressively developed a subsurface campaign which wrung from the Allies the command of the subsurface of the seas and threatened the defeat of the Allies. This was a progressive development the mission of which was indicated not only by matériel results, but more particularly by the contemporaneous diplomatic correspondence of Germany with the United States.

It followed from this combination of changing conditions that if it was desired to throw a balance of naval power against the Allies a large surface fleet of capital ships and their auxiliaries would be effective, whereas if it was desired to throw a balance of naval power against the German submarine campaign, a surface fleet of capital ships and their auxiliaries would be of little avail, but a large contingent of antisubmarine craft, such as destroyers and submarines, would be essential.

In a long statement evidently prepared with great care a witness for the Navy Department, Capt. W. V. Pratt, set up the contention that as a state of war existed between the Allies and the Central Empires between August, 1914, and April, 1917, and that as the United States was a neutral power during this period, it would have been a breach of neutrality for the United States to make what might be interpreted as preparations to enter the war on the side of the Allies by building during its neutrality an unusual number of destroyers, etc. This contention was put forward apparently as an adequate reason to explain the fact that prior to our entry into the

war no program of antisubmarine construction had been undertaken. (See pp. 1464–1466, printed testimony.)

In the face of these contentions the Secretary of the Navy himself introduced in his prepared testimony an extract from his annual report dated December 1, 1915, wherein he recommended a five-year building program calling for the expenditure of about $100,000,000 a year on new vessels for five years. This then constituted the greatest expansion of the American Navy when we were not at war in the history of the country. But an examination of the numbers and types of new vessels recommended (and subsequently authorized) and of the schedule of the resulting fleet, as shown in the Secretary's report and testimony (p. 2339), reveals the fact that this great expansion was but an expansion of our surface battle fleet and a balancing up of its capital ships with screening vessels and auxiliaries to the capital ships, such as cruisers and destroyers. There was no especial emphasis on destroyers or other antisubmarine craft. This five-year program, inaugurated in 1916, and so during the period of our neutrality, was merely a great and balanced expansion of our surface battle fleet such as to give us greater power against other surface battle fleets, but not much more power against submarines. (See pp. 2336–2341, printed testimony.)

The fact that on the recommendation of the Secretary of the Navy and during the period of our neutrality this great surface battle fleet building program was inaugurated would seem to cut the ground from under the contention that for a neutral power to expand its naval establishment in time of war, so as to affect potentially one or the other of the belligerents, would be a breach of neutrality. It is difficult to see why, if the building of great antisubmarine forces in 1916 would have been a breach of neutrality toward Germany, the building then of a great surface battle fleet was not a breach of neutrality toward the Allies. For as previously stated an American surface battle fleet during the war could have been of efficient use only against the Allies. It should be said, however, that in 1916 it may have been the thought of the administration that the Allies were to be defeated in due course and that we should prepare to defend ourselves against a victorious Germany. Be that as it may, the facts remain that a large building program was inaugurated in 1916 and that our neutrality was not thereby broken. But it would seem to be impossible to avoid the conclusion that a grievous mistake was made by the Navy Department as to the type of vessel which should have been built. We built to fight surface battle fleets, whereas we should have built to fight submarines. It was admitted that no special antisubmarine building program was inaugurated before we went into the war. This shows a grievous lack of coordination between the Navy Department's building program in 1916 and world conditions as they were in 1916. Of preparedness as to building program for the kind of war we would be called on to wage there was practically and admittedly none.

PREPAREDNESS AS TO PERSONNEL PRIOR TO 1917.

The testimony showed that in 1915 the General Board had strongly urged that an increase of 19,600 men to the enlisted personnel was essential to the proper manning of the fleet as it then existed. It

was adduced, however, that the Secretary of the Navy brought about the elimination of this recommendation from the annual report of the General Board and then allowed it to be thought that the enlisted personnel of the Navy at that time was adequate. (See pp. 700–715, 1138–1142, printed testimony.)

In his testimony the Secretary contended that then he did not believe that he could get Congress to authorize both such an increase in personnel and also the great 5-year building program, and that as he considered the immediate building of a great addition to our surface battle fleet more important than the immediate increase in the crews manning the already existing vessels of the fleet, he abstained from asking for the additional personnel the General Board had thought necessary. It should be added that the then Chief of the Bureau of Navigation was influenced to agree with the Secretary's view that an increase in personnel was unnecessary, and thereby earned severe criticism from his fellow officers. (See pp. 2331–2346, 2736–2740, printed testimony.)

We have just seen that the inauguration in 1916 of the 5-year building program of a great addition to our surface battle fleet was an unfortunate misdirection of building preparations at that time, almost useless against submarines, and open to the interpretation that during the period of our neutrality we were preparing either to use it during the war against the only surface battle fleets then on the high seas—those of the Allies—or against those of whoever should come out of the European War as victor. It is difficult to see from this procedure how in 1916 the administration had in mind any thought of Germany's being a world menace that must not be allowed to win. And it would seem to be impossible to avoid the conclusion not only that the 5-year battle-fleet program at that time was a misdirection of effort, but that it was a still greater error on the part of the Secretary to sacrifice to this mistaken program the proper manning of our already existing fleet by the addition of 19,600 men, as urgently recommended to him by the General Board.

The Secretary having taken the position above outlined as to personnel, the unpreparedness in this respect outlined in the immediately ensuing section should not be surprising.

PREPAREDNESS OF THE FLEET ON FEBRUARY 2 AND APRIL 6, 1917.

Prior to the appearance of the Secretary of the Navy before the subcommittee there was much contradictory evidence heard as to the preparedness of the fleet. Some of the witnesses referred to the floating establishment as a whole and alleged that it was far from properly prepared. Other witnesses, while using essentially the same phraseology, seemingly had in mind only small fractions of the whole floating establishment—the first-line battle fleet—which they asserted was in a high state of preparedness. As the Secretary in previous official statements had heralded to the country the epigram that when we entered the war the Navy was "ready from stem to stern" (see p. 3064, printed testimony), the chairman of the subcommittee moved to ascertain the actual state of facts by writing the following letter to the Secretary of the Navy (see pp. 3080–3081, printed testimony):

APRIL 21, 1920.

To Hon. JOSEPHUS DANIELS,
Secretary of the Navy.

DEAR MR. SECRETARY: It is requested that the Navy Department furnish the following information to the Senate Subcommittee on Naval Affairs on or before Wednesday next, the 28th of April:

I. For each and every individual battleship on the Navy list on the 2d of February, 1917—

(*a*) State whether in full commission, in commission in reserve, in commission in ordinary, or out of commission.

(*b*) State exactly where located then.

(*c*) State number of days then necessary to make material repairs essential for war service.

(*d*) State number of rounds of shells then on board for main battery.

(*e*) State percentage of personnel then on board in terms of per cent of full war complements as 100 per cent.

II. For each and every individual battleship on the Navy list on the 6th of April, 1917—

(*a*) State whether in full commission, in commission in reserve, in commission in ordinary, or out of commission.

(*b*) State exactly where located then.

(*c*) State number of days then necessary to make material repairs essential for war ervice.

(*d*) State number of rounds of shells then on board for main battery.

(*e*) State percentage of personnel then on board in terms of per cent of full war complements as 100 per cent.

III. For each and every individual battleship on the Navy list on the 7th of April, 1917, which was then not in proper material condition for instant war service overseas and which then had not on board its full complement of officers and men—

(*a*) State date upon which the making of necessary repairs was started.

(*b*) State date upon which the making of necessary repairs was completed.

(*c*) State yard (or other place) where repairs were made.

(*d*) State date upon which each ship obtained its full war complement of officers and men.

IV. State for each and every individual battleship its apportionment of reserve shells for its main battery in terms of rounds for each ship calculated from the total reserve of shells ready but not on board on the 7th of April, 1917.

This letter continued through paragraphs V to VIII, which asked similar questions as to all cruisers and through paragraphs IX to XII which asked similar questions for all destroyers except that paragraph XII referred to depth bombs for destroyers instead of to main battery ammunition as for the battleships and cruisers. The letter then closed:

It is requested that the Navy Department's report in reply be accompanied by separate tabulations for battleships, cruisers, and destroyers as per the inclosed forms.

Yours truly,

FREDERICK HALE.

The following response was received (see p. 1645, printed testimony):

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY,
Washington, D. C., April 23, 1920.

MY DEAR SENATOR: I am in receipt of your favor asking for certain information, and in reply I have to state that I have asked the Office of Naval Operations to prepare a statement which will give you the information requested.

Sincerely, yours,

JOSEPHUS DANIELS.

Hon. FREDERICK HALE,
United States Senate, Washington.

This was followed by the following letter accompanied by the required detailed tabulations referring individually to each and every battleship, cruiser, and destroyer (see p. 3081, printed testimony):

APRIL 20, 1920.

Hon. FREDERICK HALE,
United States Senate, Washington, D. C.

MY DEAR SENATOR: Complying with your letter of April 21, 1920, in which you requested that the Navy Department furnish certain information for the Senate Subcommittee on Naval Affairs on or before Wednesday, the 28th day of April, I am forwarding you herewith, by direction of the Secretary, this information tabulated separately for battleships, cruisers, and destroyers, as requested.

Yours, respectfully,

B. F. HUTCHISON,
Captain, United States Navy,
Acting Chief of Naval Operations.

The tabulations were first put in evidence by Rear Admiral Josiah S. McKean on the 29th of April. (See pp. 1698–1708, printed testimony.)

Attention is invited to the fact that this letter threw upon the Navy Department itself, under the direction of the Secretary, the burden of making an official, detailed, and categorical reply, presumably according to its records. And the fact that its statistical reply was detailed, categorical, and specific evidences that it was promptly drawn from records readily available to those in the Navy Department.

Attention is invited to the fact that the chairman of the subcommittee, when calling for data on matériel preparedness of each and every battleship, cruiser, and destroyer, asked the simple question of the Navy Department—

State number of days then necessary (on February 2 and April 6, 1917) to make material repairs essential for war service.

No detail was called for as to whether the "material repairs essential for war service" were to the hull, machinery, or armament. No limiting, technical specifications of any kind were set up. The Navy Department was left entirely free to say, in its own judgment and of its own records, whether any certain vessels on April 6, 1917, did or did not then require material repairs *essential* for war service. If a vessel did require material repairs of an essential nature before it was deemed fit for war service, the burden of stating from its records the number of days that would be required to make such repairs was placed squarely on the shoulders of the Navy Department. In short, the Navy Department was asked merely to indicate whether on February 2 or April 6 a vessel was then in fit matériel condition for war service and, if not, how many days it would take to put her in fit matériel condition for war service.

Under these circumstances it would seem to be impossible to avoid the conclusion that the replies made by the department, as to the matériel condition of the battleships, cruisers, and destroyers, are official and authoritative.

It should be said that almost every vessel of the classes designated and reported as requiring "material repairs essential for war service" on April 6, 1917, subsequently had repairs made and was reported as later not having "material repairs essential for war service" to be made. In other words, almost every one of the battleships, cruisers, and destroyers on the Navy list on April 6, 1917, no matter how old they were, was apparently deemed by the Navy Department to be sufficiently serviceable in the war to warrant the expenditure of money and man power and navy yard facilities to put them in material condition for war service.

The fact that the Navy Department expended efforts to this end on the older vessels puts the Navy Department between the horns of a dilemma. For if these older vessels were of no war use, it was a grievous misexpenditure to put them in repair. But if they were deemed serviceable, as is indicated by their having been put in repair, then they can not be set aside as of no use for the war. In other words, if repaired, it was because they were thought useful. But then if they were not in repair on April 6, 1917, the useful floating establishment was not in essential repair on the day we went into the war. In short, having repaired these vessels for the war, they must be admitted as a part of the war fleet which was said to be "ready from stem to stern."

As to personnel, attention is similarly invited to the fact that the chairman of the subcommittee called for but a simple response to the following:

State percentage of personnel then on board (on Feb. 2 and Apr. 6, 1917) in terms of per cent of full war complements as 100 per cent.

The Navy Department was not called on to state what it considered should be the full war complement of each vessel. No discussion was raised as to that. The Navy Department was not called on to state what numbers of the personnel were with the vessels on that date. Inferentially it was merely asked to compare its schedule of what was the official "full war complement" of a vessel with its record of the personnel attached to her on, say, April 6, and state the per cent ratio of the latter to the full war complement.

The record shows not only the full detail of the statistical reports made by the Navy Department but also certain summary tables compiled by merely arithmetical processes from them. In view of these it would be superfluous to give here more than the most important conclusion as calculated from these reports. (See pp. 3107–3113, printed testimony.)

On April 6, 1917, according to the statistical reports of the Navy Department to the chairman of the subcommittee, essentially only one-third of the fleet (battleships, cruisers, and destroyers) did not have scheduled against them any "material repairs essential for war service," or, in other words, on that day, as far as matériel condition was concerned, were fit to fight. But on that day essentially two-thirds of the battleships, cruisers, and destroyers had more or less "material repairs essential for war service" scheduled against them, and, on the average as stated, these amounted to 56 days per vessel. (See p. 3107, printed testimony.)

Similarly, on April 6, 1917, according to these statistical reports, essentially only about one-tenth of the fleet (1 battleship, 1 cruiser, and 16 destroyers) had on board their full war complements of personnel, while essentially nine-tenths of the vessels of the fleet did not have their full war complements on board, and in fact averaged to have but 57 per cent thereof. (See p. 3107, printed testimony.)

At the morning session of May 26, 1920, the following occurred (see p. 3064, printed testimony):

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Secretary, in your annual report for 1918 you state that the Navy from stem to stern had been made ready to the fullest extent possible for any eventuality?

Secretary DANIELS. Mr. Chairman, I had apprehended that you would ask that question, because you have asked it of everybody else, so I prepared you an answer

I want to be very careful about this answer because when I look back on it I am surprised at the moderation of my language.

Mr. Chairman, you have repeatedly quoted an extract from my annual report for 1918 and have made it the basis of questions asked nearly every witness. It seems to be such a favorite question of yours that I will quote it in full:

"Before the President went before Congress on the 2d day of April, 1917, and delivered his epoch-making message, which stirred the hearts of all patriots, and in the climax said, 'America is priviliged to spend her blood and her might for the principles that gave her birth and happiness and the peace which she has treasured; God helping her, she can do no other,' the Navy from stem to stern had been made ready to the fullest extent possible for any eventuality."

You have asked repeatedly of witnesses, "Would you say that the Navy on April 6, 1917, was ready from stem to stern?" I will save you the trouble of asking that question of me, and will answer it now.

The CHAIRMAN. One minute, Mr. Secretary. That was your statement, not the President's, was it not?

Secretary DANIELS. That part, from "stem to stern" was mine.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

Secretary DANIELS. But this previous part is not mine.

The CHAIRMAN. I thought you were referring to it as a statement of the President.

Secretary DANIELS. It is one of the best statements that I ever made, and one of the truest. It is one of my statements that I think is really a good epigram, and really sums up in a few words the whole story of the Navy. If I had written a whole book, I could not have said it more truly.

The CHAIRMAN. What do you mean by "one of the truest statements"?

Secretary DANIELS. One of the best statements; because all my statements are true, so far as I know.

The Navy was ready from stem to stern.

* * * * * * *

The CHAIRMAN. Admiral Benson was your Chief of Operations, was he not?

Secretary DANIELS. Chief of Operations; yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. I will quote his statement. I read from page 4479 of the typewritten record. [Reading:]

"The CHAIRMAN. Would you say that the Navy was in all respects prepared for war in April, 1917?

"Admiral BENSON. It was not.

"The CHAIRMAN. Would you say that the statement in the Secretary's annual report that the Navy was from stem to stern ready for war in April, 1917, was justified?

"Admiral BENSON. Not from my point of view; no."

A few minutes after the presentation of the above quoted testimony the tabulations were introduced, showing that on April 6, 1917, about two-thirds of the vessels of the fleet required "material repairs essential for war service," amounting to an average of 56 days per vessel, and that nearly nine-tenths of the fleet was incompletely manned, having on the average but 57 per cent of their war complements on board. The Secretary remonstrated violently in spite of the fact that the detailed figures used in the compilation came from the Navy Department itself.

PREPAREDNESS AS TO SHORE ESTABLISHMENT.

It will be recalled that the shore establishment has been described as "the department that, in accordance with schedules based on national policies, builds the material weapon of the Navy—the fleet—and keeps it in material fitness, with the aid and supplementary cooperation of such private shipyards and factories as may be desired. The shore establishment is the construction and maintenance department." (See ante, p. 21.)

While comparatively little testimony was submitted in connection with the preparedness and war work of the shore establishment, yet some of the evidence prepared by the Navy Department permits of certain general conclusions as to its capacity or preparedness as

shown by the great work it did during the early months of our participation in the war.

The following tabulation is calculated by simple arithmetical processes from the detailed statistical statements made by the Navy Department in response to the previously mentioned letter of April 21, 1920, from the chairman of the subcommittee. (See pp. 3080–3092, printed testimony.)

Schedule showing "Material repairs essential for war service" effected between Feb. 2 and Apr. 6, 1917.

Line.	Battleships.	Cruisers.	Destroyers.	Totals.
	A.	B.	C.	D.
1. Total vessels on Navy list, Feb. 2, 1917	37	32	67	136
2. Number not requiring "Material repairs essential for war service" on Feb. 2, 1917	12	18	6	36
3. Number requiring "Material repairs essential for war service" on Feb. 2, 1917	25	14	61	100
4. Number to repair between Feb. 2 and Apr. 6, 1917	5	4	0	9
5. Number requiring "Material repairs essential for war service" on Apr. 6, 1917	20	10	61	91

This shows that on the day we severed diplomatic relations with Germany, February 2, 1917, out of a total of 136 battleships, cruisers, and destroyers, only 36 did not require "material repairs essential for war service" on that date. During the next two months, "material repairs essential for war service" were completed on 5 battleships and on 4 cruisers—a total of 9 vessels, or an average of, say, 4½ vessels per month. But although we had a total of 67 destroyers on February 2, 1919, and although only 6 of these on the day we broke diplomatic relations with Germany were said not to require "material repairs essential for war service," yet the above tabulation reveals the astonishing fact that during these precious two months not one additional destroyer out of the 61 requiring repairs was added to the 6 not requiring repairs. A further analysis of the detailed report made by the Navy Department as to the number of days required to make the essential repairs to each destroyer shows that, on February 2, 1917, out of the 61 destroyers requiring repairs there were 19, none of which required over 20 days to put them in shape for war service, and that on the average these 19 additional destroyers would have been put in shape in 14 days. (See p. 3088, par. 9, *c*, printed testimony.)

In other words, if the facilities of the shore establishment were adequate and were not diverted to other uses, the 6 destroyers in matériel condition fit for war service on February 2, 1917, could have been supplemented by 19 others, so that before March 1 there would have been 25 destroyers not requiring material repairs essential for war service.

A further analysis of the detailed report made by the Navy Department as to the length of time required to put destroyers in matériel shape, as of February 2, 1917, shows that of the 61 destroyers then requiring "material repairs essential for war service," only 9 required more that 50 days of repairs. In other words, if the

facilities of the shore establishment were adequate, and if the order had been given soon after February 2, 1917, to put destroyer repairs ahead of everything else, then before April we should have had, not a pitiful 6 destroyers, but 58 destroyers in matériel condition for instant war service. But as things were run, as will appear later, it was August before we had that many of our destroyers in matériel condition for war. (See p. 3088, par. 9, *c*, printed testimony.)

Recalling that on February 1, 1917, Germany had declared unrestricted submarine warfare, that the crux of the war from then on was to maintain the volume of merchant tonnage and keep the maritime lines of communication of the Allies open so as to maintain civil and military sustenance, and man power and supplies at the front, and recalling that the destroyers were one of the most deadly enemies of the submarine and one of the best guards of merchant shipping, it is almost impossible to account for the astounding fact that between February 2 and April 6, 1917, our naval shore establishment added 5 battleships and 4 cruisers to the 12 battleships and 18 cruisers we already had in matériel condition for war, while to the 6 destroyers we had in condition, it did not add one out of the 52 destroyers that could have been put in matériel condition for war in less than 50 days. Throughout the precious two months after we had severed diplomatic relations and before we had declared war, our fleet was allowed to remain with but 6 destroyers in materiel condition for war.

The following table shows the progress made by the shore establishment in completing the "matérial repairs essential for war service" required by the fleet after April 6, 1917. (See pp. 3080–3092, printed testimony.)

Schedule showing progress of ompleting "Material repairs essential for war service" to battleships, cruisers, and destroyers after Apr. 6, 1917.

Line.		Numbers of vessels on which material repairs were completed in months indicated.							
		Battleships.		Cruisers.		Destroyers.		Total.	
	Numbers requiring material repairs on Apr. 6, 1917	20		10		61		91	
		Each month.	Cumulative.	Each month.	Cumulative.	Each month.	Cumulative.	Each month.	Cumulative.
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	April, 1917	5	5	1	1	6	6	12	12
2	May	3	8	5	6	24	30	32	44
3	June	1	9	.....	6	9	39	10	54
4	July	2	11	.....	6	9	48	11	65
5	August	2	13	3	9	7	55	12	72
6	September	1	14	1	10	1	56	3	75
7	October	3	17	.....	10	.....	56	3	78
8	November	.....	17	.....	10	.....	56	.....	78
9	December	.....	17	.....	10	.....	56	.....	78
10	Vessels in repair prior to Apr. 7, 1917	17	.....	22	.....	6	.....	.....	.....
11	Total vessels in repair Dec. 31, 1917	.....	34	.....	32	.....	62	.....	.....
12	Average number of months to make repairs	3.5	.....	3.2	.....	3.8	.....	3.2	.....
13	Vessels still to be repaired Jan. 1, 1918	3	.....	.....	.....	5	.....	.....	.....

The outstanding fact shown by this table is that of the 136 battleships, cruisers, and destroyers of our fleet in April, 1917, all but 3 old battleships and 5 destroyers had been put in matériel condition for war before November, 1917; that is, it took over 6 months after we declared war before our fleet, practically as a whole, was ready. And the fact that the Navy Department caused this great fleet to be put in condition for war is prima facie evidence that the Navy Department thought it necessary for war. Why, then, was it not made ready for war before war was declared?

Rear Admiral C. P. Plunkett said in his testimony (see p. 525, printed testimony):

> The truth of the matter is that if we had been up against Germany at the outbreak of this war we would be paying the indemnity to-day instead of their paying it, and all because we did not have a sufficient personnel.

The fact that it took the shore establishment over six months to put the fleet into condition for war, as to matériel, supports Admiral Plunkett's conclusion from the basis of matériel, as well as from the basis of personnel.

Of more importance than that it took over six months after war was declared for the shore establishment to put the fleet in matériel condition, is the fact that, beginning in April, 1917, 17 battleships and 10 cruisers were put in matériel condition in less than seven months or at an average of about 4 per month. And, in addition to this, the shore establishment, in this period, put in matériel condition 56 destroyers, or an average of about 9 per month, making a total average output of about 13 vessels per month as compared to 4½ per month between February 2 and April 6, 1917.

While it would not be proper to draw too specific conclusions for such data, yet they seem to indicate that the shore establishment so increased its work after April 6 as to lead to the inference that it was not in as high a degree of preparedness before that date as it should reasonably have been in view of the fact that a world war of immediate naval bearing had been raging for nearly three years. Yet of all this matter relating to the work of the shore establishment, the most amazing is not that it took seven months to prepare the fleet after the war was declared, but that between February 2 and April 6, 1917, no destroyers were put in shape, whereas over 50 might have been made fit for instant war service before April 6.

PREPAREDNESS AS TO MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION.

We have passed in review the relative preparedness of comparatively objective elements of the Navy; of its fleet as to matériel and personnel; of its shore establishment as shown by work done; of the dearth of detailed and authorized war plans; of the inappropriateness of its building program before we entered the war; but less objective than any of these elements is the organization of the management.

Evidently the purpose of a naval management organization is that it may properly administer and prepare a Navy for war, for until all powers cease to menace us, potentially if not actually, the best safeguard against war is preparedness to fight to a victorious end any war thrust upon us; and if war comes it must be fought to a vic-

torious end or we may suffer a national calamity. The responsibility for the preparedness of the Naval Establishment provided by Congress and the responsibility for its proper direction in war rest on the naval management organization.

The real test of its fitness in plan and adequacy in ability is the manner in which it directs the Navy in war. Having just been through a war, we do not have to form conclusions as to the fitness and adequacy of our naval management organization from only peace conditions, but can judge it in the light of actual accomplishments in war. To do this we must postpone our consideration of it, however, until after we shall have reviewed the actual conduct of the Navy in the war.

SECTION III.

THE CONDUCT OF THE NAVAL WAR.

INTRODUCTORY.

The frame of mind of the American administration, naval and otherwise, and consequently its conduct upon our entry into the war, will perhaps be better appreciated if it is recalled that after Germany declared unrestricted submarine warfare in February, 1917, and before Congress adjourned by limitation early in the following March, the President sought to have the United States enter the state of "armed neutrality."

This is a well-recognized status and was practiced at times by some of the northern and western nations of Europe during the European war occasioned by the American Revolution and during the Napoleonic wars. Upon entering the state of armed neutrality, a neutral, while adhering to its neutrality, declares to both or all belligerents that if its rights as a neutral on the seas are infringed by any of the belligerents, it will defend those rights on the spot by force of arms. Neutrality is preserved and force is used only in self-defense. It is a purely self-defensive status.

Congress failed to accede to the President's request and during March the submarine warfare developed in such a way that Congress was called in special session at the beginning of April and acceded to the President's suggestion that it declare that Germany's acts against the neutral rights of the United States had brought on a state of war.

Throughout the period from February 2 to April 6, 1917, the emphasis was on our maritime rights as a neutral, while the fact that the German submarine campaign threatened to bring about the conditions described by Mr. Hoover in his testimony was not given the prominence due it. In short, our official position on entering the war seems to be appropriately characterized as purely self-defensive.

ARMED GUARDS ON MERCHANTMEN.

Shortly after the inception of the movement for "armed neutrality" American merchant ships began to be armed with naval guns, many of which were taken from the secondary batteries of some of our larger war vessels; and these guns for defense against submarines were manned by naval gun crews, commanded by junior officers and petty officers. Rear Admiral C. P. Plunkett, who had raised our naval gunnery to the highest state of efficiency it has ever attained, testified as follows regarding this:

* * * As a matter of fact, I think the putting of guns on merchant ships is very much against the wishes of the merchant people; but they did put them aboard, and in order to avoid any possible disruption or disputes, although there were a few minor ones, of course, we sent the highest type of our chief petty officers in charge of these

guards, and officers so that if any question did arise they would be handled in the proper manner; and I might say in passing, that if the members of this committee have never read the reports of our armed guards, especially those written by our chief petty officers, they have missed some of the most illustrious history that has ever been written of the sea. The work that those people did is thrilling, and I do not know a single solitary case in which they failed to measure up to what was expected of them. But it raised Cain with the American Navy.

That also was a defensive move. The first solution of that was in the adoption of the convoy system, which was an offensive move; that is to say, if a submarine wanted to get a merchant ship he had to fight for it. If you remember, there was great stress laid on the arming of merchant ships, which was a purely defensive measure. I think I am correct in that, am I not?

The CHAIRMAN. Why would not the submarines have to fight to get the ships that were armed?

Admiral PLUNKETT. As Admiral Sims explained to you, they got them without their ever seeing them.

The CHAIRMAN. But they had to get them by torpedo instead of guns?

Admiral PLUNKETT. Yes; they had to get them by torpedo instead of guns.

Senator TRAMMELL. I think the Admiral is correct in saying that it is to be considered a defensive measure. I think the President took the ground that we had a right to arm them, without our even being at war with Germany, and they were armed before we were at war with Germany, so that it certainly was defensive then. If it had not been, it would have been an act of war.

Admiral PLUNKETT. Yes; I think that I am right in that.

Senator TRAMMELL. Yes; it is considered so in international law. We were not at war with Germany when we first armed our merchant ships.

Admiral PLUNKETT. I have not any familiarity with international law.

Senator TRAMMELL. I am just saying that I think you are correct in stating that that was a defensive measure.

Admiral PLUNKETT. I am simply saying that it was not a measure of offense against the enemy, but it was purely a defensive measure.

The CHAIRMAN. I was just getting the point in my own mind.

Admiral PLUNKETT. So that if we continued it after we went into the war, we were still adopting a defensive measure and not an offensive measure. In other words, our trained personnel was being used for defensive purposes and not for offensive purposes. Do you get my point?

The CHAIRMAN. I get your point. I wanted it explained.

Admiral PLUNKETT. Yes. There is the parting line, as referred to in the letter of January 7 that Admiral Sims wrote, and that is the prime reason why the fleet—and when I speak of the fleet I mean the battleships—were not ready for war at the end of the war, because it takes years to train officers and men to conduct the gunnery of a modern battleship.

The question has come up here, how long we should have started ahead in order to get officers. Ten years is not a minute too soon. But whether we should have all our ships fully manned and ready for battle is a matter of policy with which we are not concerned in any way whatever. But when you attempt to keep 16 battleships in full commission, unless you keep them fully ready for war they are not worth the money you are spending on them, because everything is absent when a ship does not understand that the reason of their existence is their ability to fight and fight effectively; and a ship which is undermanned can not fight effectively, no matter what the skill of the people may be.

In short, putting naval armed guards on merchantmen was a purely defensive move, and, therefore, a step primarily in harmony with the President's movement for "armed neutrality." But it was not a military offensive move. It protected merchantmen from being sunk by shell fire from a submarine and forced the latter to use torpedoes. But it was of slight if any protection against a torpedo attack by a submerged submarine. And the taking of the gun crews from the naval vessels destroyed the gunnery of the latter.

It should be added that some of the Allies had been arming their merchantmen defensively for some time and with fairly good defensive results against shell fire. But the measure was universally

recognized as being not offensive, as being not a successful defense against torpedoes, and as not tending to reduce the submarine torpedo menace.

WAR ADVICES.

As a starting point in our review of some of the more important war advices or suggestions for plans and action, we may well begin with the so-called General Board plan of February 4, 1917, quoted in full on pages 26 and 27 hereof. Of all the 22 steps to be taken as detailed therein 21 may be described as preparative and defensive. The final and twenty-second step, dwelt on with great emphasis by the Secretary in his effort to make it appear that his policy was one of military offense from the start, was as follows:

22. And, as most important, arrange, as soon as possible, plans of cooperation with the naval forces of the Allies for the joint protection of transatlantic commerce and for offensive naval operations against the common enemy.

It did not appear in the testimony that any such arrangements were effected prior to April 6, 1917.

On the 29th of March, 1917, the American naval attaché in London cabled to the Navy Department as follows (p. 3227):

The highest authorities hope unofficially that we might find it possible to cooperate as follows:

1. Hold on the Pacific coast to the canal and later the South Pacific to Cape Horn.
2. Keep our Asiatic forces intact.
3. Base our destroyers on Ireland and operate as soon as we find our Atlantic seaboard free.
4. Except for the east side, hold the Atlantic north and south.

Attention is invited to the fact that before we entered the war our Navy Department was thus notified by its representative at the center of the allied naval command that "the highest authorities" hoped that our cooperation would take the form of defensively "holding"—that is, taking over the patrol of—the American Pacific coast and the Atlantic Ocean, except its east side, and that we would keep our Asiatic forces intact, a bit of advice from London of especial and enduring interest. Offensively their hope was that we would base our destroyers on Ireland and operate as soon as we found our Atlantic seaboard free. The order in which this cable sets out its four items may be of especial significance in view of world conditions as they were actually in March, 1917.

Immediately after the United States entered the war the Allies instructed their naval commanders in the western Atlantic to arrange with our Navy Department specifically for cooperation in the patrol of these areas against raiders, and conferences ensued at Washington.

The Secretary of the Navy submitted in his evidence the following dispatch, said by him to have been sent to the British Admiralty by Admiral Browning, British Commander in Chief in the western Atlantic, as showing the result of these conferences. (See p. 2086, printed testimony):

APRIL 13, 1917.

The Commander in Chief to the Naval Attaché, via Ambassador, Washington.

Your 246. Following are points of agreement arrived at with United States Navy Department; French admiral sending telegram to Paris; question raised with British Admiralty:

(1) One squadron immediately ready to proceed from North Atlantic port on receipt information of escape raider. Operations this squadron will be coordinated with allied squadrons. Area of operations, Cape Sable to longitude 50° west, thence south to parallel 20 N. E.

(2) Second squadron on coast of South America will be provided as soon as possible in near future. Area from Brazilian coast parallel 5 south to meridian 30 west, then south to 15 south, etc.

(3) Six destroyers will be sent over in immediate future, based on British and French ports.

(4) United States will look after west coast of North America from Canadian to Columbian boundaries.

(6) United States China squadron be maintained for present.

(7) United States supervise Gulf of Mexico and Central America.

(8) On appearance enemy submarine to send submarines to Canadian coast, etc. Small patrol vessels for French coast will be supplied when available. Armed naval transport for carrying railway material to France to be furnished.

It will be noted that paragraph (5) is omitted from the dispatch as introduced in evidence by the Secretary who explained this omission by the following footnote he made to this dispatch when submitting it in evidence:

NOTE.—Paragraph (5) is omitted, as it relates to another country and ought not to be printed.

It is not apparent at first glance why in his testimony given on May 12, the Secretary of the Navy omitted paragraph (5) and inserted the above note—this in view of the fact that said paragraph had become a part of the record on the preceding March 13. (See p. 121, printed testimony.) But said paragraph was not the only omission by the Secretary; for the dispatch had on it the following notation from the French minister of marine:

Following points raised by French minister of marine:

First. Provision of small patrol vessels for French coast not yet possible owing to requirements of home defense. When available, however, they will be supplied, France escorting them over and manning, if necessary. Every possible effort will be made immediately to supply these. Too much reliance should not be placed, however, in early success.

Second. Provision of armed naval transports for carrying (?) (railway material) to France. One will be furnished immediately, a second and third as soon as possible.

In saying:

Too much reliance should not be placed, however, in early success—

it is evident that the allied representatives had not been overly impressed with the preparedness and intentions of the Navy Department.

The result of this and later conferences at Washington is given by Rear Admiral Charles J. Badger, the president of the General Board, who testified as follows (see p. 1106 et seq., printed testimony):

On April 11 Vice Admirals Browning and Grasset, respectively commanding the British and French cruiser and patrol squadron in the western Atlantic, with members of their staffs, met in the general board room in conference with the Secretary of the Navy, the Assistant Secretary, and a considerable number of our leading naval officers, to discuss the war situation and to set forth the ways which in their opinion the United States could best render assistance to the Allies. While a discussion of the general subject was had the British and French admirals were particularly concerned as to the patrol of the east coast of North and South America, for which their forces were considered inadequate. My recollection of this conference is that everything asked for was heartily accorded and steps were immediately taken to carry the agreement arrived at into effect.

23. On May 2 Rear Admiral de Chair, Royal Navy, and Commodore Gaunt, Royal Navy, naval attaché at Washington, appeared before the board to give information

and their opinions as to the best methods of cooperation between the Allies and ourselves. Rear Admiral de Chair had been sent specially by the British Admiralty to fully acquaint the Navy Department with the naval situation abroad from the British point of view.

24. On May 3 Vice Admiral Chocheprat, French Navy, and the French naval attaché, appeared to discuss matters of cooperation between our Navy and those of the Allies, principally the French.

25. The naval attachés from all the allied nations were, after the declaration of war, extremely active and were ready at all times to give information from their respective Governments or to immediately try to obtain any that was desired by our department.

26. Later Vice Admiral Grant, Royal Navy, commander in chief of the British North Atlantic cruiser squadron, brought his flagship to Washington and remained for several months as a liaison officer between the British Admiralty and our Navy Department.

27. From start to finish of the war the Navy Department suffered from no lack of accurate information as to the progress of the war from sources outside of our own information gatherers. (See the general board's summary of the situation May 3, 1917, appended, marked "I.")

(The summary above referred to is here printed in the record, as follows:)

[See p. 1107 et seq., printed testimony.]

G. B. No. 425. (Serial No. 724.) Confidential.

MAY 3, 1917.

From: Senior member present.
To: Secretary of the Navy.
Subject: Further recommendations as to the employment of patrol craft to meet submarines.
References: General Board letter, G. B. No. 425 of April 28, 1917 (serial No. 721).
Subject: Immediate steps to be taken for efficient cooperation against submarines.

Since forwarding the above reference the General Board has obtained from the senior naval members of the British and French commissions now in this country additional specific information in regard to the submarine situation, the measures which the British and French are now taking, and suggestions as to the measures which the United States may best take to supplement British and French endeavor, which is now a probable maximum.

2. The General Board has also interviewed the officer in charge of naval districts in order that concrete and specific information might be the basis of the recommendations which the General Board feels called upon to make in the present great emergency and as supplementary to its discussion of the urgency of the present situation in reference (a), copy appended.

3. The statements of the senior naval members of the British and French commission before this board May 2 and 3 may be briefly summarized as follows:

(*a*) The number of patrol vessels, both British and French, now available or in prospect is not sufficient to meet the submarine campaign waged by Germany.

(*b*) The present rate of destruction of food carriers to England and France, unless it can be reduced in the next two months, will result in starving both England and France.

(*c*) England will be starved out before France.

(*d*) The need for patrol craft is immediate; the critical period is now; and in the next two months the fate of England may be decided.

(*e*) Unless armed patrol craft, destroyers, and any surface craft able to keep the sea are dispatched in the next few weeks, they will be too late to prevent disaster to England first and to France second.

(*f*) Fifty armed surface craft dispatched now would be "a real help." Two hundred sent now would do much to prevent the disaster which threatens England, especially.

(*g*) The vessels most desired are destroyers; then sea-keeping craft armed with 5-inch, 4-inch, or 3-inch guns, capable of a sustained cruising speed of 13 knots; then any armed sea-keeping craft to relieve British patrol craft of greater speed. Ocean-going tugs are also most valuable for patrol work and for towing into port damaged vessels.

(*h*) In regard to other assistance, Great Britain needs now two mine layers of 18 knots' speed and a large number of Navy defense automatic mines.

(*i*) The belief was expressed that Germany was building submarines faster than they were being destroyed.

4. The officer in charge of naval districts, who appeared before the General Board, stated that approximately the following numbers of listed vessels could be armed and used for patrol in British and French waters if the Government had and exercised the authority to take them over for naval purposes.

Seagoing tugs, armed with 3 to 5 inch guns	50
Yachts, armed with 3 to 5 inch guns	30
Steam fishing vessels, armed with 3 to 5 inch guns	50
Steam trawlers, armed with 3-inch guns	10
Total	140

Approximate number of Government vessels available for patrol in British waters:

Destroyers	36
Naval converted yachts and gunboats	15
Revenue cutters	10
Total	61
Grand total	201

5. The Bureau of Ordnance states that there are in service the following naval guns, thus indicating that there are sufficient guns to arm any patrol vessels that it is practicable to fit out:

3-inch	864
4-inch	491
5-inch	673
6-inch	318
Total	2,346

6. The General Board is convinced that the emergency exists now; that the time element is of overwhelming importance; that every effort should be made, first, to meet or prevent submarine attack, and, second, as of less importance, to supply additional food and munition carriers, and that sending 200 or more patrol craft to Europe in the next two months will go far toward preventing the collapse of Great Britain.

7. The General Board, in view of the above considerations and those more fully stated in reference (a), makes the following recommendations and urges with all the emphasis at its command that action to carry them out be immediate and that such action be prosecuted uninterruptedly, to the exclusions of other war preparations if necessary, having constantly in view the statement of the naval members of the British and French commissions that Great Britain's fate may be decided in the next two months by the submarine campaign alone.

(*a*) Concentrate department effort upon the passage at once of legislation, if needed, to enable the President to take over and utilize the yachts, tugs, and other craft necessary for the above patrol duty.

(*b*) Take over, arm, and fit out such patrol craft in the least possible time, utilizing the full resources of navy yards and private plants to expedite the work, postponing other work which in any way interferes therewith.

(*c*) Dispatch at once at least 36 destroyers for patrol work in British and French waters, accompanied by repair ships, and provide for the necessary fuel and supply ships at stated intervals.

(*d*) Establish a base at a point on the Irish coast for destroyers, from which they may operate to patrol shipping routes. The senior naval member of the British commission suggests Berehaven, on Bantry Bay, Ireland, as the most suitable location and possessing all the facilities necessary for a base. Also, as the patrol craft become available, establish a base at Brest.

(*e*) Send in advance 100 enlisted men and necessary officers to Great Britain and the same number to France for instruction in mine sweeping.

(*f*) Manufacture naval mines of the anchored automatic type for use in British waters in the number to be agreed upon with the British naval authorities.

(*g*) Fit out and dispatch two mine layers, 18 knots speed.

(8) The General Board wishes to reiterate with the utmost earnestness that it believes disaster to Great Britain can only be prevented by immediate action as recommended above.

CHAS. J. BADGER.

Attention is invited first to paragraph 3 of the foregoing letter, which shows that the conferences in Washington with allied naval officers had given the General Board an illuminating general picture of the crisis of the naval war in European waters. Paragraph 4 then shows that the General Board surveyed the resources believed to be available for immediate dispatch to Europe; but it should be noted that according to reports made by the Navy Department early in May, 1920, to the subcommittee there were in April, 1917, a half dozen destroyers and not 36 in matériel condition for war.

Paragraph 6 is so important as to warrant repetition:

6. The General Board is convinced that the emergency exists now; that the time element is of overwhelming importance; that every effort should be made, first, to meet or prevent submarine attack, and, second, as of less importance, to supply additional food and munition carriers, and that sending 200 or more patrol craft to Europe in the next two months will go far toward preventing the collapse of Great Britain.

Especial attention is invited to paragraph 7 wherein it is recommended that at least 36 destroyers be dispatched at once for patrol work in British and French waters (there were not that many in matériel condition); that destroyer bases be established first in Ireland and then in France, and that 100 enlisted men and necessary officers be sent over for instruction in mine sweeping.

The closing paragraph (8) is noteworthy in connection with what we said as to the disaster to which the United States, having entered the war in April, was exposed throughout the ensuing summer because of the imminent danger almost from month to month that either Great Britain or France, or both, would collapse as a result of the submarine campaign.

MISSION OF REAR ADMIRAL W. S. SIMS.

Unaware of previous action taken secretly, the General Board on April 5 recommended that a naval mission of inquiry be sent to Great Britain and another to France. The personnel recommended was as per the following (see p. 1106, printed testimony):

APRIL 5, 1917.

Memorandum for the Chief of Naval Operations.

Names suggested for commissions (to be sent abroad to obtain information as to methods of prosecuting naval war abroad. See G. B. Serial No. 700):

FRANCE.

Rear Admiral T. S. Rodgers, Capt. H. H. Hough, Commander David F. Sellers, Lieut. H. H. Crosby, Lieut. Wadleigh Capehart, and Naval Constructor H. G. Gilmor.

ENGLAND.

Rear Admiral W. S. Sims, Capt. W. V. Pratt, Commander Yates Stirling, Commander F. H. Clark, Lieut. F. A. Daubin, Lieut. G. L. Caskey, Lieut. S. C. Hooper, and Naval Constructor E. S. Land.

(Sent in accordance with your request.)

CHAS. J. BADGER.

It will be noted that Rear Admiral Sims was suggested by the General Board on April 5, 1917, to head a mission of eight officers to Great Britain.

In point of fact on that date Rear Admiral Sims and his aid were approaching the shores of Great Britain, having been secretly

dispatched in response to a call from our ambassador at London, Mr. Page, that a naval officer of high rank be secretly sent to London to become intimately acquainted with the maritime situation, as known only there in its full extent, and to cooperate with the high naval command of the Allies, long centered in London, when the United States might enter the war.

Nowhere in the testimony of its witnesses did the Navy Department show that any detailed orders had been given Rear Admiral Sims, or that he had been advised of any general or detailed plans of the Navy Department for participation in the war; and he testified to the same effect, pointing out that had policies and plans been developed before his departure it would have been natural and helpful to outline them to him.

Arriving in London on April 10, 1917, Rear Admiral Sims immediately got in touch with the naval authorities there and cabled his findings on April 14. On April 28 he was appointed by the Navy Department to command the United States destroyer forces operating from British bases (when they should have arrived). On June 14 the title of his command was changed to "Commander United States Naval Forces Operating in European Waters." After the formal organization of the Allied Naval Council at the close of 1917, the Navy Department ordered him to act as a member of this council, representing the Secretary of the Navy and the Chief of Naval Operations which from the date of his arrival in London had been his major actual though informal function with the informal naval body out of which the Allied Naval Council was formed.

The scope of Rear Admiral Sims's mission, the manner in which he performed it, and the esteem in which he was held by the Secretary of the Navy prior to his criticism of the Navy Department are shown in the following official letter and subjoined memorandum from the Secretary of the Navy to Hon. Thomas S. Butler, chairman Committee on Naval Affairs, House of Representatives (see p. 3154 printed testimony):

WASHINGTON, *July 22, 1919.*

MY DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I am in receipt of your favor of July 19, requesting the department's recommendation on H. R. 7551. The promotion of Admiral William S. Benson and Rear Admiral William S. Sims to be permanent admirals of the Navy meets with my cordial and hearty approval and is in accordance with the message which the President sent to Congress on Friday, July 18. * * *

In the anxious days before duty led the United States to enter the World War, when it was decided to arm merchant ships, the President determined to send to Great Britain a naval officer of high rank and approved ability to represent our country. He selected Rear Admiral Sims for what was then a delicate mission, as it was all during the succeeding months, an assignment that called for a man of quickness of grasp, mastery of his profession, and ability to sit as the equal in any conference of the naval leaders of the free nations. The country approved the selection of Rear Admiral William Snowden Sims. He had already shown the qualities which made his mission not only of the greatest service to his own country, but which brought allied navies into war fellowship as well as in close cooperation. He was at once welcomed into the conferences of naval leaders and during the whole war was recognized among our allies, as well as by his own country, as one of the ablest and most brilliant officers in the cause that demanded initiative, understanding, and a comprehension which included among others the hard duty to safeguard the carrying of millions of fighting men across the seas and to defeat the submarine menace. It is a matter for national gratification that in Rear Admiral Sims America sent as commander of the United States naval forces operating in European waters an officer who served the world with such conspicuous ability as to win the confidence, the approval, and also the sincere admiration of the whole world. He has been given the highest honors by foreign countries which appreciated his rare accomplishments. He was promoted during the war because of his high merit

successively to vice admiral and admiral, and it is just that this highest rank shall be conferred upon him by his countrymen, and that it shall be a decoration for life of which his children may be proud.

The honors which the President proposed for these distinguished officers is not only a recognition of their large contribution to the winning of the war, but these promotions will be regarded by the whole Navy as being conferred because these officers incarnate the courage, the skill, and deathless service rendered in the grim days of war by all Navy officers and by all Navy men who gave themselves fully to the victory which blesses mankind to-day.

I venture to suggest that the bill be amended by adding after "permanent admiral," in line 6, "with the pay of active admiral during their lives," and by striking out the words "and they shall not be placed upon the retired list except upon their own application," and in lieu thereof there be substituted "and the President is authorized, in his discretion, upon or after their retirement, to assign them to active duty." The policy of placing any officer permanently on the active list is one which is open to grave objection. These officers should, upon reaching the age of retirement, be placed on the same footing as all other officers, and their continuance upon active duty should be determined by the commander in chief of the Navy, who may well be empowered, in his discretion, to assign them to active duty after retirement.

If these changes are made the bill would read as follows:

"A BILL To appoint Rear Admiral William S. Benson, United States Navy, and Rear Admiral William S. Sims, United States Navy, as permanent admirals in the Navy.

"*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled*, That the President is hereby authorized to appoint, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, Admiral William S. Benson, United States Navy, and Rear Admiral William S. Sims, United States Navy, permanent admirals with the pay of active admiral during their lives, and the President is authorized, in his discretion, upon or after their retirement, to assign them to active duty, and whenever such offices shall be vacated by death or otherwise the offices shall cease to exist."

With these minor changes, I earnestly recommend the passage of H. R. 7551, introduced in the House on July 18 by Chairman Butler.

I am appending hereto a brief summary of the naval service of both these naval officers.

Sincerely, yours,

JOSEPHUS DANIELS,
Secretary of the Navy.

Hon. THOMAS S. BUTLER,
Chairman Committee on Naval Affairs,
House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.

The following is the memorandum subjoined by the Secretary of the Navy to the above letter (see p. 3156, printed testimony):

MEMORANDUM—ADMIRAL SIMS'S DUTIES.

Admiral Sims's duties at the beginning of the war were those of United States naval representative at the British Admiralty, from which point the policy and operations of the allied navies were directed. As United States naval vessels were ordered abroad from time to time, Admiral Sims was ordered to command all vessels, and later ordered to command the United States naval forces operating in European waters. On November 20, 1917, he was given additional duty as naval attaché at London. Admiral Sims was personally responsible for the degree and character of cooperation which was effected in the employment of the United States Navy in European waters. This cooperation may be considered as the principal accomplishment abroad to be credited to the Navy during the war. The forces of the United States Navy in the summer of 1917 entered a naval campaign which was approaching its fourth year of progress and in which practically every form of naval activity existed.

In order to throw in the force of our service to the fullest extent required exceptional tact, and in many cases it required abandonment of methods to which our service was accustomed to—methods which we knew to be less efficient but which were necessary to the combined campaign. Admiral Sims's policy, which was adhered to with a clear mind throughout, was that his mission could be accomplished only by treating the United States naval force in the rôle of reserves being brought to the front, and there is ample evidence that the example set by the coordination thus worked out had a marked effect upon the efficiency and progress of the campaign.

Upon the signing of the armistice, Admiral Sims had under his command approximately 81,000 officers and men and 373 naval vessels. A brief résumé of some of the accomplishments of the forces under his command follows:

1. Escorted 62 per cent, or about 1,250,000 troops of the United States, without loss from enemy action.

2. Escorted 27,000 of all United States, allied, and neutral shipping, carrying cargoes to France, England, and Italy during the period from April 6, 1917, to November 9, 1918.

3. Laid 80 per cent of the northern mine barrage from Orkney Islands to Norway.

4. Maintained all vessels under his command self-supporting in all respects, except in cases of serious accident and docking.

5. Initiated tactics of "barrage system" in use of depth charges.

6. Established, manned, and operated 9 shore bases to support cruising vessels and 34 aviation bases in England, Ireland, France, and Italy, from which aircraft bombed enemy submarine bases, and patroled at sea, protecting conveys from submarines.

7. Advised and assisted Mr. Hoover in operating food ships throughout Europe; established naval organization in every part of Europe where United States merchant vessels called. This was necessitated because all peace-time port facilities were so thoroughly disorganized.

8. Operated fleet of 67 ships, manned by the Navy, carrying coal from Cardiff to France for the Army.

9. Operated 120 submarine chasers in offensive warfare against the submarines, maintaining five special and three auxiliary bases to support these vessels.

10. Based and operated a flotilla of seven submarines from the base in Ireland and five submarines from the base in the Azores.

11. Reinforced the British Grand Fleet with five United States battleships.

12. Operated a division of United States dreadnaughts, based on the west coast of Ireland, held in constant readiness to oppose threats on convoys by enemy battle cruisers or battleships.

Admiral Benson retires September 25, 1919.

Admiral Sims retires October 15, 1922.

Act of May 22, 1917, fixes pay of fleet admirals at $10,000 per annum, and fleet vice admirals at $9,000 per annum, and their allowances were made to correspond with those of general and lieutenant general in the Army, respectively, in act of July 1, 1918.

Act of August 29, 1916, provided that the "Chief of Naval Operations shall have the rank and title of admiral, to take rank next after the Admiral of the Navy, and shall, while so serving as Chief of Naval Operations, receive the pay of $10,000 per annum and no allowances."

Act of July 1, 1918, provides that "the Chief of Naval Operations shall receive the allowances which are now or may hereby be prescribed by or in pursuance of law for the grade of general in the Army."

Naval act of May 13, 1908: "Hereafter all commissioned officers of the active list of the Navy shall receive the same pay and allowances according to rank and length of service, and the annual pay of each grade shall be as follows: For admiral, $13,500 * * *."

Admiral Sims ordered abroad, confidential duty, March 28, 1917.

Ordered to command all destroyers operating with British, April 28, 1917, including tenders, supply vessels, and all auxiliaries.

Made vice admiral from May 25, 1917.

Ordered "Commander United States naval forces operating in European waters" June 14, 1917 (change of title).

Additional duty as naval attaché November 20, 1917.

Made admiral November 27, 1918.

Detached March 31, 1919.

The records of the department show that Rear Admiral William Snowden Sims, United States Navy, was born in Port Hope, Ontario, Canada, October 15, 1858; on June 24, 1876, was appointed a cadet midshipman, Naval Academy, from the eighteenth congressional district, State of Pennsylvania, by the Hon. W. S. Stenger; completed the four-year course of instruction at the academy June 10, 1880, finally graduating June 22, 1882; on June 22, 1882, promoted to midshipman; promoted to ensign (junior grade) March 3, 1883, which rank is now obsolete; promoted to ensign June 26, 1884; and subsequently promoted as follows: Lieutenant (junior grade), May 9, 1893; lieutenant, January 1, 1897; lieutenant commander, November 21, 1902; commander, July 1, 1907; captain, March 4, 1911; rear admiral, August 29, 1916.

During his career as a naval officer he served on naval vessels, among others, as follows: U. S. S. *Kentucky*, *Monterey*, *Brooklyn* (aid on staff to commander in chief of Asiatic station and later as fleet intelligence officer and inspector of target practice,

Asiatic station); U. S. S. *Minnesota*, commanding officer from 1909 to 1911; commander of torpedo flotilla, on U. S. S. *Dixie*, 1913 to 1915; U. S. S. *Nevada*, commanding officer.

He was naval attaché at Paris, France; St. Petersburg, Russia; and Madrid, Spain, from September, 1896, until April, 1900; aid of Admiral Dewey on U. S. S. *Dolphin*; president of Naval War College from January, 1917, until April, 1917, on which date he assumed command of all American destroyers, tenders, and auxiliaries operating from British bases, with flagship on the U. S. S. *Wadsworth*, and later on the U. S. S. *Melville*. In accordance with the act of Congress approved May 22, 1917, he was designated as commander of the United States destroyers operating from British bases and authorized to assume the rank and hoist the flag of a vice admiral in the Navy; on June of that year his title was changed to commander, United States naval forces operating in European waters, with additional duty as naval attaché in London, England. He was designated in November, 1918, as full admiral in the Navy, effective from December, 1918, and served as commander of United States naval forces operating in European waters throughout the Great War and up to and including March, 1919, when he returned to the United States and assumed duty as president of the Naval War College at Newport, R. I., at which time he reverted to his former lineal rank in the Navy as rear admiral.

In the annual report of the Secretary of the Navy for 1919, also published before Rear Admiral Sims had made any criticisms of the Navy Department, Secretary Daniels referred to Rear Admiral Sims in the following terms (see p. 52, annual report for 1919, and p. 3153, printed testimony):

[Extract from annual report of the Secretary of the Navy for 1919.]

ADMIRAL SIMS'S DISTINGUISHED SERVICE.

In the allied naval council, Admiral William S. Sims, who had been the able representative of the Navy in Europe during the entire war, displayed ability of the highest order. His brilliant services abroad won world-wide admiration, and he demonstrated that he is worthy of the highest honors Congress can confer upon him. Admiral Hugh Rodman, who had commanded the dreadnaughts in the North Sea, represented our country in receiving the surrender of the German Fleet, and was justly honored and decorated by allied nations. In March, 1919, after receiving deserved and distinguished honors and many expressions of the esteem in which he is held, Admiral Sims set sail for home to become the president of the War College, where he has already set a new and higher standard which will insure an enthusiasm and zeal and knowledge on the part of the naval officers privileged to attend the War College, which will be reflected in a more efficient Navy of the future. He was succeeded in command of the United States naval forces in European waters by Rear Admiral Harry S. Knapp, one of the ablest and wisest of naval officers, who also, upon the return of Admiral Benson to this country, became our naval advisor to the peace conference at Paris.

The foregoing reproductions of official documents either represent the Secretary's honest opinion of Admiral Sims up to the time of their publication or they do not. If they do not, and as they are official statements to the President and to the Congress, then they constitute an official deception of Congress by Secretary Daniels.

Many officers pointed out in their testimony that, in view of the proven and manifest unpreparedness of the Navy Department as to policies and plans, and of the fleet as to matériel condition and personnel, it was fortunate for the United States that the power of the allied navies kept that of the German surface fleet confined and thus furnished a naval shield back of which the United States could bring its naval and military forces into a state of preparedness; for, as they pointed out, had we suddenly had to face a great power without the protection of this allied shield, a national disaster would seem to have been unavoidable.

But another element in which we were also fortunate was that, as the war had been going on for nearly three years, the Allies had developed a center of naval intelligence and command located in London. Rear Admiral Sims, as the naval representative of the United States to this center of naval information and command, was given there the fullest possible range and detail of the trend and day-to-day conduct of the naval war as it was known there and nowhere else. Indeed, from the point of view of Washington, the position of Rear Admiral Sims in London constituted an "advance post" of the office of the Chief of Naval Operations, already prepared, highly organized, and located in the center of the critical zone of the naval war, where comprehensive and detailed information was instantly obtainable on the daily changes in the maritime situation, and obtainable with a degree of promptness, accuracy, and thoroughness impossible at Washington, 3,000 miles from the seat of war and the zone in which the war would be either won or lost. To have an admittedly competent officer as its representative in such an "advance post" should have enabled the Navy Department to acquire with great rapidity and to act promptly on those lines of cooperative naval effort which would most quickly turn a situation "dangerous almost beyond description," as Mr. Hoover has described that of the spring of 1917, into the victory which was finally won. But to do this two essentials were requisite: First, that the Navy Department properly equip and support its representative; and, second, that it act at least responsively to his advices, if not in accordance with them.

We have seen from Mr. Hoover's testimony that in the spring of 1917 "the shipping position was, roughly, that at that rate of submarine sinkings the war was at a measurable end. * * * Oh, it is obvious that the war would have come to an end almost in a moment if the supplies had been cut off. The most desperate period, I might say, was between April (1917) and the following September." (See p. 118, printed testimony.)

Having the civilian point of view thus stated and in mind, it may be well to review the military retrospect as to the importance of shipping to the American Expeditionary Forces which, as will appear, eventually determined the issue. Then, having both the military and civil retrospect in mind, we may more appreciatively review the conduct of his mission by Rear Admiral Sims and the use made of his advice by the Navy Department.

REVIEW OF GEN. PERSHING'S FINAL REPORT, PARTICULARLY IN ITS BEARING ON OCEAN TRANSPORT.

Upon the entrance of the United States into the war, the immediate military necessity was to stop the probability of the Allies being defeated on the western front because their reserves were being exhausted more rapidly than were those of the enemy. This first step accomplished, a counteroffensive in preponderant force was essential for the military defeat of Germany.

A military victory depended on the American Army. But the power of the American Army depended on safety and volume of ocean transport. To secure safety of transport and to maintain shipping tonnage volume by preventing sinkings by submarines

was the mission of the American Navy. If it failed, military defeat seemed unavoidable. If it were dilatory the military contest would be protracted. If it succeeded it would enable the American Army to be the determining factor in the winning of a military victory. In everything the military power of the American Army at the fighting front in France depended on the Navy.

The conduct of the Navy, especially during the earlier part of the American participation in the war, may perhaps best be reviewed after a review of the operations of the military forces whose being in France depended wholly on ocean transport from the United States, and so on naval operations against the submarine campaign intended to impede ocean transport to Europe.

An examination of the Final Report of Gen. John J. Pershing, Commander in Chief American Expeditionary Forces, published by the United States Government, seems to make the following conclusions unavoidable:

(*a*) That early in 1917 and more particularly early in 1918 the defeat of the Allies on the western front seemed imminent.

(*b*) That the American Expeditionary Forces were the contingent that turned imminent defeat into victory.

(*c*) That had these forces arrived in France prior to the spring of 1918, according to schedule, the imminence of defeat then would probably have been avoided.

(*d*) That there was no question of lack of ability on the part of the United States to raise, train, equip, and munition adequate numbers of troops in time and that this was done with a liberal margin of safety.

(*e*) That the factor which delayed the arrival of adequate American forces at the western front prior to the military crisis of the spring of 1918 was the dearth of shipping tonnage.

(*f*) That the arrangement which enabled adequate American forces to arrive at the western front in time to turn the tide was the British tonnage made available for American transport in 1918.

(*g*) That throughout the American military campaign in France, shipping tonnage was the controlling and limiting factor to American force.

Gen. Pershing, in his report, makes only the three following references to the inadequate production of military supplies in the United States:

> Except for the delay early in 1918 in obtaining clothing and the inferior quality of some that was furnished, and an occasional shortage in forage, no army was ever better provided for. (Pershing Rept., p. 73.)
>
> Without going into a complete discussion of aviation matériel, it will be sufficient to state that it was with great difficulty that we obtained equipment even for training. As for up-to-date combat planes, the development at home was slow, and we had to rely upon the French, who provided us with a total of 2,676 pursuit, observation, and bombing planes. (Pershing Rept., p. 76.)
>
> In the matter of tanks, we were compelled to rely upon the French and the English. (Pershing Rept., p. 76.)

Gen. Pershing's only comments on the supply of ordnance are given in full as follows:

> Our entry into the war found us with few of the auxiliaries necessary for its conduct in the modern sense. The task of the Ordnance Department in supplying artillery was especially difficult. In order to meet our requirements as rapidly as possible, we accepted the offer of the French Government to supply us with the artillery equip-

ment of 75's, 155-millimeter howitzers, and 155 G. P. F. guns from their own factories for 30 divisions. The wisdom of this course was fully demonstrated by the fact that, although we soon began the manufacture of these classes of guns at home, there were no guns of American manufacture of the calibers mentioned on our front at the date of the armistice. The only guns of these types produced at home which reached France before the cessation of hostilities were one hundred and nine 75-millimeter guns. In addition, twenty-four 8-inch howitzers from the United States reached our front and were in use when the armistice was signed. Eight 14-inch naval guns of American manufacture were set up on railroad mounts, and most of these were successfully employed on the Meuse-Argonne front under the efficient direction of Admiral Plunkett, of the Navy. (Pershing's Report, p. 75.)

But this report states that military priority was given to the transport of Infantry and Machine Gun Corps over Artillery because of a shortage in shipping tonnage.

Apart from these terse references to inadequate production of supplies in the United States, there is no question raised in his report as to the ability and performance of the country in raising, equipping, and supplying more than adequate military forces in time to be effective. The outstanding factor to which he refers as controlling and limiting the American military effort in France is the great shortage of shipping tonnage. To this he refers over three dozen times in his report in such terms as the following:

After duly considering the tonnage possibilities I cabled the following to Washington on July 6, 1917: "Plans should contemplate sending over at least 1,000,000 men by next May." (Pershing report, p. 8.)

For all practical purposes the American Expeditionary Forces were based on the American Continent. Three thousand miles of ocean to cross with the growing submarine menace confronting us, the quantity of ship tonnage that would be available then unknown, and a line of communications by land 400 miles long from French ports to our probable front presented difficulties that seemed almost insurmountable as compared with those of our allies. (Pershing report, p. 11.)

Our available tonnage was inadequate to meet all the initial demands, so that (shipping) priority of material for combat and construction, as well as for supplies that could not be purchased in Europe, must be established by those whose perspective included all the services and who were familiar with general plans.

* * * * * * *

The functions of the general staff at my headquarters were finally allotted to the five sections, each under an assistant chief of staff, as follows: To the first, or administrative section—ocean tonnage, priority of overseas shipments, replacement of men and animals, organization and types of equipment for troops, billeting, prisoners of war, military police, leaves and leave areas, welfare work and amusements. (Pershing report, p. 12.)

The following extract is quoted from the cabled summary of an allied conference held on July 26 (1917) with the French and Italian commanders in chief and the British and French chiefs of staff: "General conclusions reached were necessity for adoption of purely defensive attitude on all secondary fronts and withdrawing surplus troops for duty on western front. By thus strengthening western front believed Allies could hold until American forces arrive in numbers sufficient to gain ascendancy." The conference urged the immediate study of the tonnage situation with a view to accelerating the arrival of American troops. (Pershing report, p. 18.

After stating the War Department's plans as of July, 1917, for the shipment of troops, Gen. Pershing says:

While these numbers fell short (by over a third) of my recommendations of July 6, 1917, which contemplated at least 1,000,000 men (in France) by May, 1918, it should be borne in mind that the main factor in the problem was the amount of shipping to become available for military purposes, in which must be included tonnage required to supply the Allies with steel, coal, and food. (Pershing Rept., p. 23.)

Under date of December 2, 1917, Gen. Pershing cabled to the War Department an estimate of the situation, in which he said:

It is estimated that the shipping needed will have to be rapidly increased up to 2,000,000 tons by May, in addition to amount already allotted. The use of shipping

for commercial purposes must be curtailed as much as possible. The Allies are very weak and we must come to their relief this year, 1918. The year after may be too late. It is very doubtful if they can hold on until 1919 unless we give them a lot of support this year. It is therefore strongly recommended that a complete readjustment of transportation be made * * *. (Pershing Rept., p. 23.)

Again on December 20, 1917, Gen. Pershing cabled to the War Department referring to "a shipping program based on tonnage in sight prepared in War College Division in September," which he characterized, in effect, as quite inadequate because of lack of shipping tonnage. (Pershing Rept., p. 24.) His report then says:

During January, 1918, discussions were held with the British authorities that resulted in an agreement, which became known as the six-division plan and which provided for the transportation of six entire divisions in British tonnage, without interference with our own shipping program. (Pershing Report, p. 24.)

Referring to results of the Amiens drive by the Germans toward the end of March, 1918, Gen. Pershing says:

The losses had been heavy and the British were unable to replace them entirely. They were, therefore, making extraordinary efforts to increase the shipping available for our troops. (Pershing Report, p. 26.)

The gravity of the situation had brought the Allies to a full realization of the necessity of providing all possible tonnage for the transportation of American troops. (Pershing Report, p. 29.)

Gen. Pershing then reports the following as incident to the ensuing German drive toward Paris:

The conference which had been agreed upon at Abbeville was held at Versailles on June 1 and 2 (1918). The opinion of our allies as to the existing situation and the urgency of their insistence upon further priority for infantry and machine gunners are shown by the following message prepared by the Prime Ministers of Great Britain, France, and Italy, and agreed to by Gen. Foch:

"The Prime Ministers of France, Italy, and Great Britain, now meeting at Versailles, desire to send the following message to the President of the United States:

"'We desire to express our warmest thanks to President Wilson for the remarkable promptness with which American aid, in excess of what at one time seemed practicable, has been rendered to the Allies during the past month to meet a great emergency. The crisis, however, still continues. Gen. Foch has presented to us a statement of the utmost gravity, which points out that the numerical superiority of the enemy in France, where 162 allied divisions now oppose 200 German divisions, is very heavy, and that, as there is no possibility of the British and French increasing the number of their divisions (on the contrary, they are put to extreme straits to keep them up), there is a great danger of the war being lost unless the numerical inferiority of the Allies can be remedied as rapidly as possible by the advent of American troops. He therefore urges with the utmost insistence that the maximum possible number of Infantry and machine gunners, in which respect the shortage of men on the side of the Allies is most marked, should continue to be shipped from America in the months of June and July to avert the immediate danger of an allied defeat in the present campaign, owing to the allied reserves being exhausted before those of the enemy. In addition to this, and looking to the future, he represents that it is impossible to foresee ultimate victory in the war unless America is able to provide such an Army as will enable the Allies ultimately to establish numerical superiority. He places the total American force required for this at no less than 100 divisions, and urges the continuous raising of fresh American levies, which, in his opinion, should not be less than 300,000 a month, with a view to establishing a total American force of 100 divisions at as early a date as this can possibly be done.

* * * * * * *

"CLEMENCEAU.
"D. LLOYD GEORGE.
"ORLANDO.'"

(Pershing Report, pp. 28, 29.)

This dispatch was followed by a cable to the War Department on June 5 (1918), signed Gen. Foch, Lord Milner, and Gen. Pershing,

which, after detailing shipment of troops required and their priorities during June and July, says:

(c) It is agreed that if the available tonnage in either month allows of the transportation of a larger number of men than 250,000, the excess tonnage will be employed in the transportation of combat troops as defined above. (Pershing Report, p. 30.)

Gen. Pershing's report then reviews the operations of the American Expeditionary Forces during the summer and autumn of 1918 and points out that the great increase in the number of American troops that it was possible to transport to France following upon the agreements as to British shipping enabled the Allies to take the counter offensive, and particularly made it possible for the new American forces to drive forward and cut the main German line of communication through Sedan as a climax to the Meuse-Argonne operations, whereupon the armistice ensued. (Pershing Report, pp. 32–59.)

It would seem pertinent to interpolate here a tabulation of the actual volume and method of transportation of American troops to Europe as derived from evidence submitted to the Senate Subcommittee on Naval Affairs. (See p. 2144, printed testimony.)

American troop transportation.

		Carried by United States vessels of all kinds.	Carried by British vessels or vessels leased by the British.	Carried by vessels operated by the French, Italians, etc.	Total transported by all kinds of vessels.	Accumulation of totals transported.
		A	B	C	D	E
1	May, 1917	1,035	508	.....	1,543	1,543
2	June	14,011	1,080	.....	15,091	16,634
3	July	5,281	7,199	296	12,776	29,410
4	August	5,419	11,890	2,094	19,403	48,813
5	September	13,917	19,671	.....	33,588	82,401
6	October	25,098	13,013	1,916	40,027	122,428
7	November	11,223	10,669	1,830	23,722	146,150
8	December	37,445	11,370	.....	48,815	194,965
9	Total for 1917	113,429	75,400	6,136	194,965	.....
10	Per cent for 1917	58.0	38.4	4.6	100.0	.....
11	January, 1918	26,662	20,514	1,879	48,055	243,020
12	February	39,977	9,259	3	49,239	292,259
13	March	56,279	27,626	1,895	85,710	277,969
14	April	68,290	49,988	1,794	120,072	498,041
15	May	99,561	145,922	2,231	247,714	745,755
16	June	121,259	154,637	4,538	280,434	1,026,189
17	July	112,465	187,028	11,866	311,359	1,337,548
18	August	124,896	147,121	14,358	286,375	1,623,923
19	September	112,536	141,628	5,506	259,670	1,883,593
20	October	76,801	105,312	1,950	184,063	2,067,656
21	To Nov. 11	1,426	10,698	.....	12,124	2,079,880
22	Totals for 1918	839,152	999,833	45,930	1,884,915	.....
23	Per cent for 1918	44.5	53.1	2.4	100.0	.....
24	Totals for 1917 and 1918	952,581	1,075,233	52,066	2,079,880	.....
25	Per cent for 1917 and 1918	45.8	51.7	2.5	.....	.....

Attention is invited to the fact that out of the total of 2,079,880 American troops transported but 194,965, or less than 10 per cent, had been transported in 1917. Furthermore, when the crisis of the German offensive came upon the Allies in March, 1918, there were less than 400,000 American troops in Europe. It may be claimed that more rapid shipment of troops prior to the spring of 1918 was impossible because the troops were not ready. But Gen. Pershing

states in his report that during this earlier period there was great dearth of shipping to transport materials essential for construction in preparation for the American forces (p. 66). In view of this dearth of shipping it is difficult to see how, had the troops been ready, they could have been transported. The conclusion seems unavoidable, therefore, that dearth of shipping tonnage was the directly controlling cause of there being so comparatively few American troops in Europe prior to April, 1918.

It will be recalled that special arrangements were made with the British in January, 1918, for the transport of American troops. The effect of this began to appear in the following April, after which month and up to the armistice the British transported 56.6 per cent of all American troops taken to Europe, while but 41.1 per cent were taken over in American vessels. Of the total transportation of the American Expeditionary Forces to Europe, 45.8 per cent was done in American vessels, 51.7 per cent was done by the British, and 2.5 per cent by the French and Italians.

In reviewing the Services of Supply, Gen. Pershing says:

"The lack of ocean tonnage to carry construction material and animals at the beginning was serious. Although an increasing amount of shipping became available as the war progressed, at no time was there sufficient for our requirements. The tonnage from the States reached about seven and one-half million tons to December 31, 1918, which was a little less than one-half of the total amount obtained." (Pershing Report, p. 66.)

Gen. Pershing's statement in this section of his report referring to "Ocean tonnage" is herewith reproduced in full. (Pershing Report, pp. 67, 68, and 69):

OCEAN TONNAGE.

Following a study of tonnage requirements, an officer was sent to Washington in December, 1917, with a general statement of the shipping situation in France as understood by the Allied Maritime Council. In March, 1918, tonnage requirements for transport and maintenance of 900,000 men in France by June 30 were adopted as a basis upon which to calculate supply requisitions and the allocation of tonnage.

In April, 1918, the Allied Maritime Transport Council showed that requirements for 1918 greatly exceeded the available tonnage. Further revisions of the schedule were required by the Abbeville agreement in May, under which American Infantry and machine-gun units were to be transported in British shipping, and by the Versailles agreement in June.

In July a serious crisis developed as the allotment for August made the American Expeditionary Forces by the shipping control committee was only 575,000 deadweight tons, afterwards increased to 700,000, whereas, 803,000 tons (not including animals) were actually needed. It was strongly urged by me that more shipping be diverted from trades and that a larger percentage of new shipping be placed in transport service.

9. Early in 1918 a scheme had been proposed which would provide priority for essential supplies only, based upon monthly available tonnage in sight. Although it was the understanding that calls for shipping should be based upon our actual needs, much irregularity was found in tonnage allotments, as shown by the following cables sent September 14, 1918:

"The following variations from cable orders are noticeable:

"Q. M. supplies cabled for, for August delivery, 182,287 short tons.

"Q. M. supplies actually received during August, 231,850 short tons.

"T. D. supplies (rolling stock, etc.) called for, for August delivery, 113,482 short tons.

"T. D. supplies actually received during August, 67,521 short tons.

"You must prepare to ship supplies we request, instead of shipping excessive amounts of supplies of which we have a due proportion.

"An increase in the allotment of tonnage must be made, even for September. It is imperative. I can not too strongly urge that the allotment be reconsidered in the light

f the above showing of our deficiencies. * * * At the present time our ability to upply and maneuver our forces depends largely on motor transportation * * *. Ve are able to carry out present plans due to fact that we have been able to borrow tem- orarily large number of trucks and ambulances from the French * * *. The hortage of ambulances to move our wounded is critical * * *. We have reached he point where we can no longer improvise or borrow. The most important plans nd operations depend upon certainty that the home Government will deliver at rench ports material and equipment cabled for. It is urged that foregoing be given ost serious consideration and that tonnage allotted for supply of Army in France be ufficient to deliver material and equipment, properly proportioned in kinds and mount, to meet the needs of our troops * * *."

The following is a brief summary of the tonnage asked for and the amount actually eceived in France during the critical period from July to October, 1918:

Month, 1918.	Cabled for by American Expeditionary Forces.	Received in France from United States.	Shortage.
	Tons.	*Tons.*	*Tons.*
uly	[1] 480,891	438,047	42,844
ugust	700,527	511,261	189,266
eptember	869,438	539,018	330,420
ctober	1,022,135	623,689	398,446
Total	3,072,991	2,112,015	960,976

[1] Tons of 2,000 pounds.

The last figure in the above-quoted tabulation brings out the tartling fact that when shipping was at its best toward the end of he war there was nevertheless a shortage of nearly 1,000,000 tons of upplies, or the equivalent of about one-third of the requisitions for uly, August, September, and October, 1918. The context ascribes his to inadequate ocean transport, making it evident that lack of hipping tonnage was, as Gen. Pershing says, "the main factor in the roblem," setting the limit to both the force and the speed with which the victorious American counter offensive could be delivered.

In view of the small American contingent in France at the end of ebruary, 1918 (292,259 troops), and in view of the great difficulties f transport up to that time—dearth of shipping tonnage having been he principal restricting influence on the American contingent—and n view of the probability of these conditions having been known in heir major outlines at that time to the enemy, there would seem to e some reasonable ground for speculation as to the bearings of these onditions on the Germans having inaugurated their offensives of March, April, May, and June, 1918, which were so very costly and so early disastrous to the allied cause. Had ocean transport permitted uch a flow of matériel and personnel to France as to put 1,000,000 American troops there by May, 1918, as called for by Gen. Pershing n July 6, 1917, it would seem more likely that the enemy, instead f inaugurating a very nearly successful offensive, would merely have trengthened his defensive.

But any deductions of this nature are quite conjectural. The navoidable conclusions from Gen. Pershing's report are that while he increment of the American Expeditionary Forces was essential o the survival of the Allies and was the factor which turned defeat, mminent in the spring of 1918, into the sudden victory of the ensu- ng autumn, "the main factor in the problem" was ocean transport,

and dearth of shipping tonnage greatly delayed the brilliant military effect of the American Expeditionary Forces, which eventually stemmed the German tide, turned it back, and brought victory out of imminent defeat.

THE FIRST DISPATCHES FROM REAR ADMIRAL SIMS, APRIL, 1917.

In view of subsequent instructions issued by the Navy Department to others, it would seem that the duties immediately confronting Rear Admiral Sims upon his arrival in London on April 10, 1917, would include the following:[1]

(1) To acquaint himself with what had actually been done by the Allied and enemy navies, at least in European waters, up to then. This would have required an historical survey covering nearly three years of the most extensive and intricate naval war in history, and such a survey was essential to a fundamental grasp of the then present conditions and of the next moves to be made.

(2) To acquaint himself with the past, present, and prospective situation of at least France, Great Britain, and Italy with respect to civil and military supplies and sustenance.

(3) To acquaint himself with the past, present, and prospective merchant marine tonnage situation in its relation to (*a*) civil and military supplies and sustenance; (*b*) troop transport.

(4) To acquaint himself with the past, present, and prospective effects of the submarine campaign in its bearing upon merchant marine tonnage and upon civil and military supplies and sustenance. That is, to learn the history and prospects of losses of tonnage, supplies, and sustenance due to submarines.

(5) To acquaint himself with the past, present, and prospective capacities of the Allies to produce new tonnage to offset in some degree past and prospective losses and to produce internally additional supplies and sustenance, both military and civil, wherewith to offset in some degree the increasing restriction of such supplies and sustenance from overseas.

(6) To acquaint himself in detail with the past, present, and prospective defensive measures taken strategically and tactically to guard merchant shipping against the attacks of submarines.

(7) To acquaint himself in detail with the past, present, and prospective offensive measures taken logistically, strategically, and tactically to counterattack the submarines, this to include counteractions on three planes; that is, by allied submarines, by allied surface vessels, and by allied aircraft.

(8) To acquaint himself in general with the military situation, at least on the more important fronts, in its relation to probable requirements for the transport of troops from the United States in so far as this would have a bearing on the maritime situation, both naval and mercantile.

(9) To find out the most pressing and vital needs of the Allies in all of the above suggested respects and the ways in which they most desired help and thought that the United States could best help them.

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[1]For analogous matter see pp. 632–633, printed testimony.

(10) To form then his own conclusions and make his reports and recommendations to the Navy Department in Washington, assuming the will of the United States as a cobelligerent to help in every way possible, in the light of her present and prospective capacity and on such lines as would bring about the maximum confidence and cooperation between all concerned.

(11) To make such preparations, civil and military, as should precede the arrival in the war zone of such naval forces as might be expected from the United States after action on his report.

(12) To make such preparations of a professional or naval nature as would be essential to the proper command and effective operation of naval forces from the United States in coordination with those of the Allies.

The evidence shows that to undertake this work Rear Admiral Sims was provided with but one aid and that, although he was made vice admiral on May 25, 1917, and appointed Commander United States Naval Forces Operating in European Waters on June 14, 1917, and although he cabled and wrote throughout April, May, June, and July, asking for additional aids, it was not until after he and his single aid had carried on his colossal task for practically four months that additional staff was sent him. Navy Department witnesses excused this by saying that officers could not be spared from duties ashore in the United States and afloat for work in London. Further comment on this would be superfluous.

Referring to his first reports after reaching London, Rear Admiral Sims testified as follows (see pp. 28–34, printed testimony):

In beginning I wish to read in full my first two reports submitted to the department—one a cable sent four days after my arrival abroad and the other a letter submitted five days later.

Although these two documents will touch on various subjects, it is necessary to read them in full, simply to establish the fact that all of the communications which followed during the next six or eight months were mere elaborations and reiterations thereof, that these two reports were very comprehensive, and that as a matter of fact there was no time up to the signing of the armistice when any cause arose for changing any of these original recommendations as made therein.

"To Secretary of the Navy, through State Department. Sent April 14, 1917."

I want to emphasize that fact particularly. This reply and this letter contained the policy suggested and the plan for the suppression of the submarine campaign, which was the whole issue of the war, so far as our Navy was concerned. This was the first cable, sent April 14, 1917 (four days after arrival in London):

"The situation is as follows:

"The submarine issue is very much more serious than people realize in America. The recent success of submarine operations and the rapidity of construction constitute the real crisis of the war.

"The morale of the enemy submarine is not broken; only about 54 are known to have been captured or sunk, and no voluntary surrenders have been recorded. The reports of our press are greatly in error. Reports recently circulated concerning surrenders are simply to depreciate enemy morale, and results are very satisfactory."

The word "satisfactory" appears in the cable, but it was a mistranslation. The word used was "unsatisfactory." That should read:

"Reports recently circulated concerning surrenders are simply to depreciate enemy morale and results are very unsatisfactory.

"Supplies and communications of forces on all fronts, including the Russians, are threatened and control of the sea actually imperiled.

"German submarines are constantly extending their operations farther into the Atlantic, increasing areas and the difficulty of patrolling. Russian situation critical. Baltic Fleet mutiny; 85 admirals, captains, and commanders murdered, and in some armies there is insubordination.

"The amount of British neutral and allied shipping lost in February was 536,000 tons; in March, 571,000 tons; and in the first 10 days of April, 205,000 tons. With short nights and better weather losses are increasing."

I invite attention to the fact there that in April the loss was over 800,000 tons.

"The British forces could not effectively prevent the escape of some raiders during the long nights, but the chances are better now.

"The Allies were notified that the chances are that hospital ships will continue to be sunk, this in order to draw destroyers away from operations against submarines to convoy hospital ships in this way causing a demand for large convoy forces in all areas not before necessary and also partially immobilizing the main fleet.

"On account of the immense theaters and length and number of kinds of communication and the material deterioration resulting from three years' continuous operation in distant fields with inadequate base facilities the strength of the naval forces is dangerously strained. This applies to all of the sea forces outside the Grand Fleet. The enemy has 6 large and 64 small submarine mine layers; the latter carry 18 mines, the former 34; also torpedoes and guns. All classes submarines for actual commission completed at a rate approaching three per week. To accelerate and insure defeat of submarine campaign immediate active cooperation absolutely necessary.

"The issue is and must inevitably be decided at the focus of all lines of communication in the eastern Atlantic; therefore I very urgently recommend the following immediate naval cooperation:

"Maximum number of destroyers to be sent accompanied by small antisubmarine craft, former to patrol designated high-sea area westward of Ireland based on Queenstown, with an advance base at Bantry Bay, latter to be an inshore patrol force. Destroyers, small craft, should be of light draft, with as high speed as possible, but low speed also useful. Also repair ships and staff for base. Oil and docks available, but advise sending continuous supply of fuel. German main fleet must be contained, demanding maximum conservation of the British main fleet. South of Scotland no base is so far available for this force.

"At present our battleships can serve no useful purpose in this area except that two divisions of dreadnaughts might be based on Brest for moral effect against anticipated raids by heavy enemy ships in the Channel out of reach of British main fleet.

"The chief other and urgent practical cooperation is merchant tonnage and a continuous augmentation of antisubmarine craft to reinforce our advanced forces. There is a serious shortage of the latter craft. For towing the present large amount of sailing tonnage in dangerous areas seagoing tugs would be of great use.

"The cooperation outlined above should be expedited with the utmost dispatch in order to break enemy submarine morale and accelerate the accomplishment of the chief American objective.

"It is very likely the enemy will make submarine mine-laying raids on our coast or in the Caribbean to divert attention and keep our forces from the critical area in the eastern Atlantic through effect upon public opinion. The difficulty of maintaining submarine bases and the focusing of shipping on this side will restrict such operations to minor importance, although they should be effectively opposed, principally by keeping the Channel swept on soundings. Enemy submarine mines have been anchored as deep as 90 fathoms, but majority at not over 15 fathoms. Mines do not rise from the bottom to set depth until from 24 to 48 hours after they have been laid.

"So far all experience shows that submarines never lay mines out of sight of landmarks or lights on account of the danger to themselves if location is not known. Maximum augmentation merchant tonnage and antisubmarine work where most effective constitute the paramount immediate necessity.

"Mr. Hoover informs me that there is only sufficient grain supply in this country for three weeks. This does not include the supply in retail stores. In a few days Hoover will sail for the United States."

That is the end of that telegram. That was a plan proposed or policy proposed, and it was adhered to throughout the war—that is, to send all possible antisubmarine craft immediately to the place where the fighting was going on. Five days later I amplified this with the following letter:

"LONDON, ENGLAND, *April 19, 1917.*

"From: Rear Admiral William S. Sims, United States Navy.

"To: The Secretary of the Navy.

"Subject: Confirmation and elaboration of recent cablegrams concerning war situation and recommendations for United States naval cooperation.

"1. Reception: My reception in this country has been exceptionally cordial and significant of the seriousness of present situation and importance to be attached to the United States entry into the war.

"I was met at Liverpool by Rear Admiral Hope, Royal Navy, a member of Admiral Jellicoe's staff, and the admiral of the port, the former having been sent by the Admiralty to escort me to London. A special train was provided which made a record run, and within a few hours after arrival in London I was received by the first sea lord (Admiral Jellicoe) and his principal assistants in a special conference.

"2. Conferences: More or less hesitancy was noted at first in presenting a full statement of the true situation, particularly (as it developed later) on account of its seriousness, combined with a natural reluctancy against appearing to seek assistance and a hesitancy in taking chances of allowing information indirectly to reach the enemy, and thereby improve enemy morale.

"I therefore positively took the position that I must be considered a part of the Admiralty organization and that it was essential to safe and efficient cooperation that I be trusted with a full knowledge of the exact situation.

"They finally consented, only after reference to the imperial war council, to my exposing the true state of affairs both as regards the military situation and rate of destruction of merchant shipping.

"I have had daily conferences with the first sea lord (Admiral Jellicoe), both at his office and residence, and also have been given entire freedom of the Admiralty and access to all governmental officials. I have freely consulted with such officials as the following: Prime minister; first lord of Admiralty (Sir Edward Carson); ministers of munitions, shipping, trade, and other cabinet officials; first sea lord and his assistants; chief of naval staff; directors (corresponding to our chiefs of bureaus) of intelligence, antisubmarine operations, torpedoes, mines, mining, etc.

"3. General statement of the situation: Since the last declaration of the enemy government, which, from intelligence information was anticipated, the submarine campaign against merchant shipping of all nations has resolved itself into the real issue of the war, and, stated briefly, the allied Governments have not been able to and are not now effectively meeting the situation presented.

"4. As stated in my first dispatch, the communication and supplies to all forces on all fronts, including Russian, are threatened, and the 'command of the sea' is actually at stake.

"5. My own views of the seriousness of the situation and the submarine menace have been greatly altered. My convictions and opinions, as probably those of the department also, had been largely based upon press reports and reports of our attachés and other professional Americans who have been abroad during the war. All of this information has been either rigidly censored or else has been given out in such form that it would be of minimum assistance to enemy morale.

"6. The necessity for secrecy which the British Government has experienced, and which I repeatedly encounter in London, and even in the Admiralty itself, is impressive. There have been remarakble and unexpected leakages of information throughout the war. Certain neutral legations of smaller countries are now under strong suspicion.

"The extent to which the submarine campaign is being waged is in itself excellent evidence of the importance attached to it by the enemy and of the degree to which they counted, and still are counting, upon it.

"The intelligence department has reliable information (as reliable as can be) that the enemy really reckoned that the Allies would be defeated in two months through shortage of supplies.

"8. With improved weather and the shorter nights now coming on, we may expect even more enemy submarine success.

"9. The commander in chief of the Grand Fleet was yesterday in conference in the Admiralty as to what greater extent destroyers and auxiliaries of the fleet may be utilized without endangering its power in the remote possibility of another fleet engagement.

"The consensus of opinion seems to be that the latter will not occur, but there is not complete unanimity in this belief, and of course, in any case, the possibility must be adequately and continuously guarded against.

"GENERAL DISCUSSION OF SITUATION.

"10. I delayed forwarding my first report of the situation with a view of obtaining the maximum information consistent with the importance of the time element. I was also somewhat deterred by a natural reluctance to alter so radically my preconceived views and opinions as to the situation.

"11. The evidence is conclusive that, regardless of any enemy diversions such as raids on our coasts or elsewhere, the critical area in which the war's decision will be made is in the eastern Atlantic at the focus of all lines of communications.

"The known number of enemy submarines and their rate of construction, allowing liberal factors for errors of information, renders it inevitable that the main submarine effort must continue to be concentrated in the above critical area.

"12. Even in this critical area it is manifest that the field is relatively large for the maximum number of submarines which the enemy can maintain in it. For example, with the present Admiralty policy (explained below) they are forced to cover all the possible trade routes of approach between the north of Scotland and Ushant.

"13. From consideration of the above and all other essential information available, it is apparent that the enemy could not disperse his main submarine campaign into other quarters of the globe without diminishing results in this and all areas to a degree which would mean failure to accomplish the mission of the submarine campaign, which can be nothing else than a final decision of the war.

"14. Considerable criticism has been, and still is, concentrated upon the Admiralty for not taking more effective steps and for failing to produce more substantial and visible results. One of the principal demands is for convoys of merchant shipping, and more definite and real protection within the war zone.

"The answer, which manifestly is not publicly known, is simply that the necessary vessels are not available; and further, that those which are available are suffering from the effects of three years of arduous service.

"15. It is insistently asked (was asked by myself) why shipping is not directed to and concentrated at various rendezvous and from there convoyed, through the dangerous areas. The answer is the same—the area is too large; the necessary vessels are not available.

"16. However, I am now consulting with the director of shipping as to the practicability and advisability of attempting some approach to such a plan in case the United States is able to put in operation sufficient tonnage to warrant it.

"17. After trying various methods of controlling shipping the Admiralty now believes the best policy to be one of dispersion. They use about six relatively large avenues or arcs of approach to the United Kingdom and Channel, changing their limits or area periodically if necessity demands.

"Generally speaking, one is to the north of Scotland, another to the north of Ireland, and three or four others covering the Irish Sea and Channel. Individual ships coming into any of these areas of approach are instructed, generally before sailing, to cross the twentieth meridian at certain and different latitudes and thence steer certain courses to port.

"At times in the past they have found one of these avenues of approach free of submarines under such conditions as to lead them to concentrate shipping therein, but invariably the enemy has become aware of the course pursued.

"18. The great difficulty in any method of shipping control is communication with the shipping itself and full cooperation by the merchant personnel. The moment a ship is captured the code either becomes dangerous or useless. The merchant code is being continually changed and at all times it can not be counted upon for more than a fortnight. The immense difficulty of changing the code and keeping shipping all over the world in touch with changes is apparent.

"19. Continual trouble is experienced with some merchant captains taking the law into their own hands and exhibiting contempt, or at least indifference, for Admiralty instructions. The American liner *New York*, upon which I took passage, furnishes a typical example. She was advised to make Fastnet Light at daylight but she passed it about 9 p. m., thus passing in daylight through the most dangerous area.

"20. The Admiralty has had frequent conferences with merchant masters and sought their advice. Their most unanimous demand is "Give us a gun and let us look out for ourselves.' They are also insistent that it is impracticable for merchant vessels to proceed in formation, at least in any considerable numbers, due principally to difficulty in controlling their speed or to the inexperience of their subordinate officers. With this view I do not personally agree, but believe that with a little experience merchant vessels could safely and sufficiently well steam in open formation."

I might state in this connection that my opinion as to the ability of merchant seamen to handle their ships in convoy came from the fact that I had been associated at one time for three years in instructing young men in navigation and merchant seamanship and I thought I knew those men better than the average officer has an opportunity to know them. At any rate, that opinion turned out, in the end, to be correct. Merchant skippers found no difficulty, under the guidance of a convoy commander, in handling their ships even up to the number of 40 in close formation, 500 yards apart, 1,000 yards between the lines, or maneuvering those ships simultaneously like a school of fish, zigzagging back and forth, in order to get out of the way of submarines. [Continuing reading:]

"21. The best protection against the submarine menace for all classes of ships, merchant as well as naval, is speed and zigzagging, not more than 15 minutes on a course. Upon this point no one disagrees, but on the contrary there is absolutely unanimity of opinion.

"22. In the absence of adequate patrol craft, particularly destroyers, and until the enemy submarine morale is broken, there is but one sure method of meeting the submarine issue upon which there is also complete unanimity—increased number of merchant bottoms, preferably small.

"'More ships! More ships! More ships!' is heard on every hand.

"23. It is also significant that until very recently the Admiralty have been unable completely to convince some members of the cabinet that the submarine issue is the deciding factor in the war. The civilian mind, here as at home, is loath to believe in unseen dangers, particularly until the pinch is felt in real physical ways.

"24. The prime minister only two days ago expressed to me the opinion that it ought to be possible to find physical means of absolutely sealing up all escape for submarines from their own ports. The fact that all such methods (nets, mines, obstructions, etc.) inherently involve the added necessity of continuous protection and maintenance by our own naval forces is seldom understood and appreciated. I finally convinced the prime minister of the fallacy of such propositions by describing the situation into which we would be led, namely, that in order to maintain our obstructions we would have to match the forces the enemy brought against them until finally the majority if not all of our forces would be forced into dangerous areas where they would be subject to continual torpedo and other attacks, in fact—in a position most favorable to the enemy.

"25. Entirely outside of the fact that the enemy does and always can force exits and thereby nullify the close blockade, the weather is a serious added difficulty. The heaviest anchors obtainable have been used for nets, mines, and obstructions, only to have the arduous work of weeks swept away in a few hours of heavy weather. Moorings will not hold. They chafe through. In this respect we could be of great assistance, i. e., in supply of moorings and buoys.

"26. The channel is not now and never has been completely sealed against submarine egress, let alone the vaster areas of escape to the north. Submarines have gone into mine fields and have succeeded in unknown ways in evading and cutting through nets and obstructions.

"27. In addition to submarines, heavy forces are free to raid and in fact escape through the channel at any time when the enemy decides that the necessity for return will justify the risk. Hence the suggestion that two divisions of our fast dreadnaughts might be based upon Brest primarily for the resulting moral effect against such possible raids.

"I was told yesterday by an important Admiralty official that while he thought the chances of raids in or escape through the channel by heavy enemy forces out of reach of the Grand Fleet (north of Scotland) were very remote, nevertheless the possibility existed and was principally thwarted on moral grounds; that is, the uncertainty in his mind of the opposition which would be encountered. He agreed with others, including the first sea lord, that the addition of some of our heavy forces to those maintained in southern channel approaches by the French and British would undoubtedly entirely preclude the possibility of such raids.

"28. Submarine losses: It has been found necessary to accept no reports of submarine losses as authentic and certain unless survivors are captured or the submarine itself definitely located by dragging. No dependence even is placed upon evidence of oil on the surface after a submarine has been attacked and forced down as there is reason to believe that when an enemy submarine dives to escape gunfire she is fitted to expel oil for the particular purpose of conveying the impression that she has been sunk and thereby avoid further pursuit.

"It has been shown that the amount of damage a submarine can stand is surprising and much more than was anticipated before the experience of the war. Upon a recent occasion a British submarine was mistaken for an enemy and though struck by several shells, dove and escaped to port.

"The submarine losses which are certain since the outbreak of war are as given in attached cablegram.

"It is estimated that between 30 and 40 submarines operate at a time in the waters surrounding the British Islands and French coast. At least one is now known to be on White Sea trade lanes."

* * * * * * *

"29. Best antisubmarine weapons: One of the most efficient weapons now used by all destroyers and patrol craft against submarines is the so-called "depth charge," sample and drawings of which have been forwarded by our naval attaché. These

are merely explosive charges designed to explode at a certain depth, formerly 80 feet, now about 100 feet. They are dropped overboard where a submarine that has submerged is assumed to be and are counted upon to badly shake up and demoralize if they do not actually cause serious damage.

"Howitzers and bomb throwers of large caliber are under construction designed to throw similar depth charges to distances of about 2,000 yards. Details will be forwarded.

"30. Torpedo protection: This subject may be summed up by the statement of the captain of a British dreadnaught who said in effect that after a year's experience he did not fear being sunk by a torpedo. Unless struck by several the worst to be anticipated is damage to shafts or rudder thus necessitating towing. Crusiers have often been struck and been able to reach port. Vital water-tight doors are kept continuously closed at sea.

"Destroyer officers have been heard to express the curious opinion that the enemy ships were more or less unsinkable. This is probably to be explained by the fact that they carry very few supplies; that they have their storage spaces compartmented or filled with wood or other water excluding material; and that, when in port, they quarter their crews in barracks and when leaving for a cruise carry the minimum amount of berthing and supply facilities. These points however are not positively known.

"On the contrary, all vessels of the British Fleet must be kept fully supplied and fueled at all times for extended cruising. This is particularly true of battle cruisers and cruisers.

"31. All officers of rank and actual experience consulted are convinced that the enemy have no unusual methods of protection or in fact any surprises in ordnance or other fighting equipment.

"32. All are agreed that the best protection against torpedoes is speed and zigzagging.

"33. It is a common experience of the naval as well as merchant service that torpedo wakes are reported where none exist. Many reports are received of torpedoes barely missing ships. This was true in the Jutland Battle. The captain on one battleship said that he received numerous reports of torpedoes passing just ahead and just astern, nearly all of which he had reason to believe did not exist.

"Streaks of suds, slicks, etc., are very deceiving and are easily mistaken for torpedo wakes, particularly when the danger of torpedoes is present. This accounts for many reports by passengers on liners and other merchant craft of seeing many torpedoes just miss their mark.

"34. Submarines versus submarines: There has always been opposition to using submarines against submarines principally on the grounds that the possibilities of their accomplishments would not be sufficiently great to justify the risk involved of mistaken identity and resulting damage to friends.

"The director of antisubmarine warfare believes, however, that such operations promised well and the experiment is now being tried with as many submarines as can be spared from the Grand Fleet. Some enemy submarines have been destroyed by this method, usually torpedoed. One valuable feature of this method lies in the fact that as long as our submarines are not so used, the enemy submarine is always perfectly safe in assuming that all submarines sighted are friends. If this certainty is removed, the enemy will be forced to keep down more and to take much greater precautions against detection. This is an advantage of no small amount.

"In addition to the possible offensive work that may be accomplished by our submarines on such duty, the plan furnishes us with more reliable information as to the limitations and capabilities of enemy vessels under the actual conditions existing in the areas in which they operate. Without this knowledge based on actual experience too much is left to conjecture, which is liable to lead to a great deal of misdirected effort.

"WM. S. SIMS."

It would serve no useful purpose to reproduce here or even to schedule the mass of subsequent documents put in evidence by Rear Admiral Sims, and admitted by Navy Department witnesses, whereby he showed that the policies he had outlined in the above cable and letter he had adhered to, in effect, and had emphasized in his subsequent reports; that eventually, and often after long delays, they were ordered carried out by the Navy Department; and that they proved to be the policies which were effective in the end.

To have formulated and sent, within nine days of his arrival in London, such comprehensive, detailed and diversified dispatches which carried so many recommendations borne out by subsequent experience is in itself a highly commendable military performance.

The outstanding statements of these first dispatches from Rear Admiral Sims might be summarized as follows:

1. On the 14th of April, 1917, there was in England only sufficient grain for three weeks, exclusive of retail stocks (and this with the harvest not due until September and submarine sinkings having increased rapidly and occurring at the rate of over 800,000 tons for the month of April).

2. The submarine campaign was then the real issue of the war, as it was imperiling supplies and communications on all fronts and threatening the very control of the seas.

3. The enemy reckoned the Allies would be defeated by the submarine campaign in two months.

4. For technical naval and military reasons it was impractible to bottle up the submarines in their home ports; submarines had gone into mine fields and through nets.

5. The Allied Governments were not meeting effectively the issue presented by the submarine campaign.

6. While submarine mine laying raids might be made on the American coast to cause public panic there, and thus immobilize there antisubmarine forces, the issue would be determined at the focus of maritime transport in the eastern waters of the Atlantic.

7. The Channel (Dover Straights) was not and never had been completely closed to submarines.

8. To insure defeat of submarine campaign *immediate active cooperation was absolutely necessary.*

9. Three lines of action would contribute to the defeating of the submarine campaign, the objective of which was to so reduce the volume of merchant tonnage in the world that the Allies could not sustain their civil population and military operations:

(*a*) An increasingly effective offensive warfare against the submarines in the critical zone of their campaign.

(*b*) The protection or defense of existing merchant tonnage at sea.

(*c*) The construction of new tonnage to take the place of that sunk.

10. As to offensive antisubmarine warfare in the critical zone, Rear Admiral Sims cabled to the Navy Department four days after his arrival in London:

> I very urgently recommend the following immediate naval cooperation: Maximum number of destroyers to be sent accompanied by small antisubmarine craft * * *, as high speed as possible * * * continuous augmentation antisubmarine craft to reinforce our advance forces. * * * There is serious shortage of the latter craft. Also repair ships and staff for base.

11. Depth charges were described as the most efficient weapon of offense against submarines.

12. It was suggested that submarines promised to prove very effective antisubmarine craft.

13. As to the protection of existing merchant tonnage: After trying various methods the Admiralty then believed the best policy to be

one of dispersion; that is, that ships sail singly and zigzag at as high speed as possible. The almost unanimous demand of merchant masters was, "Give us a gun and let us look out for ourselves." They insisted that it would be impracticable for merchant vessels to proceed and maneuver in convoy formation. Apparently up to the arrival of Rear Admiral Sims the Admiralty had accepted these opinions as conclusive. Rear Admiral Sims said regarding them:

> With this view I do not agree, but believe that with a little experience merchant vessels could safely and sufficiently well steam in open formations.

And he reported consultations with the shipping director looking to convoying United States vessels.

14. While there were demands for the convoy of merchant shipping, the conclusive reason against it, "which manifestly is not publicly known, is simply that the necessary (convoying) vessels are not available."

15. As protection to the large amount of sailing tonnage, Rear Admiral Sims suggested the sending of seagoing tugs to tow sailing vessels at a higher speed through the submarine danger zone.

16. As to the construction of new tonnage to replace that sunk, Rear Admiral Sims cabled on April 14, 1917:

> The chief other and urgent practical cooperation is merchant tonnage * * *. Maximum augmentation merchant tonnage and antisubmarine work where most effective constitute the paramount immediate necessity.

In addition to the foregoing observations and recommendations pertaining directly to the submarine situation, Rear Admiral Sims's dispatches made the following observations and suggestions with respect to capital naval vessels:

17. The German main fleet must be contained.

18. This required the maximum conservation of the British main fleet.

19. Heavy enemy forces were free to raid through the English Channel and thus might escape into the Atlantic.

20. It was suggested, therefore, that two divisions of fast American dreadnaughts should be based on Brest, as their presence there would deter the Germans from making a raid in heavy force.

21. The desirability of sending a continual supply of fuel—presumably oil for destroyers and battleships—was suggested.

The cable of April 14 contained the paragraph:

> Cooperation outlined above should be expedited with utmost dispatch.

It will perhaps be best to outline briefly the major actions taken and results accomplished separately under the heading of (*a*) offensive warfare against submarines, (*b*) convoying as a protection of merchant tonnage at sea, (*c*) construction of new tonnage to take the place of that sunk, and (*d*) actions as to capital ships. Having done this, certain reasons why more prompt and effective actions were not taken will be set out.

OFFENSIVE WARFARE AGAINST SUBMARINES.

When the United States entered the war at the height of the sinkings by submarines, almost all of the patrol work in the North Sea, English Channel, and eastern Atlantic was being done by vessels of the British Navy, the weight of the French Navy being concentrated

in the Mediterranean. It is interesting to find, therefore, that at that time the total British force available for general patrol work consisted of but 22 destroyers and 18 sloops. "This total of 40 destroyers and sloops represented the whole available force (for general convoy or patrol work) at the end of February."[1] This was all the available force wherewith to search for and attack the submarines that were making the staggering sinkings in these waters at that time.

That the process of hunting for submarines on the high seas in the hope of destroying them when found was anything but conclusive will appear from the following table, which shows the numbers of submarines sunk in the English Channel, in the Irish Channel, and to the southward and westward of the British Isles during 1917:[2]

January	1	April	0	July	1	October	1
February	1	May	2	August	2	November	3
March	1	June	2	September	4	December	3
	3		4		7		7

In all a total of but 21 submarines sunk in these areas, and this during the year that saw over six and half million tons of shipping sunk.[3]

While the offensive patrol against submarines produced such meager direct results, the indirect results of tonnage saved from sinking by salvage and more particularly by the patrol individually escorting particularly valuable ships and by its harrassing the submarines in their operations, might be expected to be in close relation to the number of patrol vessels at work in the area. There was, therefore, the utmost urgency for the patrol reinforcements for which Rear Admiral Sims called upon the Navy Department in his cable and letter of April 14 and 19. But, it was none the less evident that a more radical change than a mere doubling or even trebling of the number of patrol vessels must be made, and made with the minimum delay, if the general defeat impending because of the work of the submarines was to be avoided.

The evidence submitted went to show that the total tonnage available to the Allies on January 1, 1917, was but 31,100,000 tons, and that their net loss in tonnage between August 1, 1914, and January 1, 1917, had been but 400,000 tons. But it also showed that the "absolute minimum of tonnage necessary to the allied cause" was 26,500,000 tons. That is, on January 1, 1914, the Allies apparently had a margin of safety of 4,600,000 tons. (See p. 35. printed testimony.)

As the sinkings during the first quarter of 1917 had been over 1,600,000 tons, or in these three months alone over fourfold the total net loss from the beginning of the war up to January 1, 1917, it was evident that a tonnage crisis of dire portent was upon the Allies.[3]

How very narrow the escape from defeat actually was is further emphasized when it is realized that the margin of safety of the allied cause on January 1, 1917, was but 4,600,000 tons, as just stated; that the total sinkings between then and the 1st of April, 1918, actually amounted to 7,766,959 tons; that new construction reduced this to a net loss of 3,959,111 tons;[3] and that, therefore, the actual

[1] Admiral Lord Jellicoe, "The Crisis of the Naval War," p. 111.
[2] See "Admiralty's Submarine Sinkings Reports," on file in United States Navy Department.
[3] See ante, p. 17.

margin by which defeat was avoided was less than 641,000 tons, or but about 8 per cent of the sinkings or 17 per cent of the new construction during the period from January 1, 1917, to April 1, 1918. In other words, had the Germans increased their sinkings by much over 8 per cent or had the allied construction of new tonnage fallen short of its accomplishment by much over 17 per cent, it is difficult to see how the allied cause could have escaped defeat when the military crisis of the spring of 1918 broke out in France. And, incidentally, it is apparent that the margin of tonnage on which the determining American Expeditionary Forces had to rely was slender indeed. In short, the maritime crisis of 1917 preceding the military crisis of 1918 nearly made it possible for Germany to win the war. Broadly speaking, one might say that, as the minimum tonnage requisite was 26,500,000 tons and the actual net margin less than 641,000 tons, the margin actually between first defeat at sea and then defeat on land was but about 2 per cent.

The evidence shows that Rear Admiral Sims persistently followed up his first dispatches with insistent explanations and requests for anti-submarine patrol forces; and in this he was reinforced by special dispatches from Ambassador Page in London to Washington (see pp. 35 to 75, printed testimony). Furthermore, there was no convincing proof introduced by witnesses for the Navy Department refuting the statement by Rear Admiral Sims that during the first months of our participation in the war the Navy Department neither acknowledged his dispatches with reasonable responsiveness nor furnished him with adequate data of its intentions for his use in allied naval conferences nor even gave him an outline of its general policy.

The evidence also shows that while Rear Admiral Sims was urging immediate concentration in the critical naval war zone, the Navy Department was considering a dispersion of vitally needed forces to secondary theaters of the naval war, thereby violating the fundamental principle of concentration in the conduct of war. (See dispatch of Apr. 22, 1917, p. 40, printed testimony.)

This is such a flagrant breach of the elements of sound strategy that it would seem proper to quote a statement of the late Admiral Mahan regarding concentration:

> In any military scheme that comes before you, let your first question to yourself be, Is this consistent with the requirement of concentration? Never attempt to straddle, to do two things at the same time, unless your force is evidently so supreme that you have clearly more than enough for each. (Mahan, "Naval Strategy," p. 43.)

It appears from the evidence, however, that on April 26, 1917, Rear Admiral Sims did receive a message announcing that a division of six destroyers had sailed from Boston for Ireland, this division being the first contingent of our naval forces to European waters, which was so happily designated unofficially as "The return of the Mayflower" (see p. 40, printed testimony), and on May 3, 1917, the Navy Department advised Rear Admiral Sims that "Ultimately there will be 36 destroyers sent as well as the *Melville*, and also the *Dixie*, should the latter be required." (See p. 43, printed testimony.)

The following table shows the total number and kind of United States naval vessels that were available in European waters month by month from April 1 to December 1, 1917 (see p. 251, printed testimony):

United States naval forces in European waters, 1917.

	Total.	Destroyers.	Tenders.	Yachts.	Gunboats.	Cruisers.	Coast Guard cutters.	Submarines.	Mine sweepers.	Cargo, miscellaneous.
April										
May 1										
June 1	19	18	1							
July 1	30	28	2							
Aug. 1	47	37	2	8						
Sept. 1	56	39	3	8	4	1	1			
Oct. 1	73	41	3	17	6	2	4			
Nov. 1	97	46	3	17	7	2	6	5	9	
Dec. 1	100	45	4	19	7	2	6	5	8	4

It will be noted that during the period covered no American submarine chasers, mine layers, or battleships arrived in European waters. Some of the circumstances connected with the dispatch of some of these forces will be touched on hereafter when discussing the policy of the Navy Department.

CONVOYING AS A PROTECTION OF TONNAGE.

Before reviewing the inauguration and results of the convoy system it may make the matter clearer to set down somewhat categorically the principles and the advantages and disadvantages of this system and those of the system of "dispersion" referred to in Rear Admiral Sims's letter of April 19, 1917, to the Navy Department.

The system of dispersion rests on the theory that if, say, several hundred merchant ships or transports are converging on the ports of France and Great Britain at a given time from many directions, and that something less than a score of submarines are in their paths, most of these ships will get by unmolested, though a certain percentage of them inevitably will be sunk. The advantages of this system are that when the naval protective escort is very limited it can be given to the most valuable ships, while others are allowed to take their chances, and individual escort can be extended in proportion to the forces available for that duty irrespective of the total volume of shipping in transit; also, as all ships are sailing independently, each can proceed at its own maximum speed, and thus transport more cargo in a given time, or until the day of its particular doom arrives.

The convoy system in one form or another has been used since before the Christian era. And it was applied almost universally by the British during the Napoleonic wars and the War of 1812 between the United States and Britain.[1] In exact antithesis to "dispersion," convoy seeks to denude the high seas of more or less defenseless merchantmen and gather them together in fleets under the protection of appropriate naval vessels. In naval wars prior to the Great War, merchantmen had to fear only surface naval vessels and privateers, and against these escorting frigates, or vessels corresponding to cruisers, were usually adequate protection. But in the Great War convoys of merchantmen had to fear not only attacks from powerful surface raiders but more particularly from submarines. Consequently, it was necessary to provide, in addition to cruiser

[1] Mahan, "The Influence of Sea Power upon the French Revolution and Empire," Chs. XVII and XVIII, and "Sea Power in its Relation to the War of 1812," Ch. XIV.

escort, adequate antisubmarine forces. And these latter had not only the objective of preventing attack from submarines but, in the event of such an attack, their duty was to inaugurate a counter-attack with the object of destroying the attacking submarine. In effect, the system forced the submarine to find and attack a group comprising specially equipped antisubmarine craft in order to attain its objective—the sinking of tonnage. But in order to make such an attack the submarine must expose itself to such a severe counter-attack as to make its own chances of survival rather scant.

Viewed in this way, the escorted convoy became a counteroffensive defensive system. And it might be well to add here that the immediate experience which promised that convoys properly protected by antisubmarine craft would be safe as long as they held together was the fact that, although the Grand Fleet had cruised the North Sea for three years and although the avowed intention of the enemy had been to wear it down by attrition from repeated submarine attacks, yet not one of its capital ships was so sunk during the war, and this although it cruised in the waters most infested with submarines.[1] In short, the antisubmarine system of convoy consisted in making a patch on the ocean practically immune to submarine attack by placing around it a screen of antisubmarine craft and then moving the convoy of merchantmen contained therein across the ocean to its destination.

The principal advantages of the convoy system consisted in that, by concentrating shipping in bunches, it became much more difficult for the submarines to find their prey. As the ships were concentrated under the command of expert naval convoy commanders, it was possible to direct and change the course of any convoy by wireless so as to avoid any submarines which had been located. And if this was not done, still the counteroffensive-defensive equipment of the convoy made it quite likely that any submarine which attacked it would be sunk. The product of these outstanding advantages of the convoy system resulted in greatly decreased sinkings in spite of persistent submarine effort.

The more pronounced disadvantages of the convoy system were that it reduced the amount of cargo carried in a given time, because (*a*) all ships in a convoy had to proceed at the speed of the slowest, (*b*) ships could not proceed from port immediately upon being loaded because they had to await the making up and sailing of the convoy, and (*c*) delays occurred at the port of destination because of overtax on the unloading facilities ensuing upon the simultaneous arrival of a large number of vessels in a convoy. And of especial bearing, the convoy system required more cruiser protection and greater antisubmarine forces than the patrol and dispersion system.

All of these advantages and disadvantages, reductions in loss of tonnage by sinkings versus reductions in total volume of cargo transported, had to be balanced along with many minor factors, and yet the conclusion had to be controlled by the adequacy or inadequacy of cruiser and antisubmarine escorting vessels. For an inadequately protected convoy would indeed have been a dangerous venture.

The following quotation from a report addressed to the Secretary of the Navy by Admiral Mayo under date of October 11, 1917, and

[1] Sims, "The Victory at Sea," p. 88.

made upon the latter's return from a tour of inspection in Europe indicates the relative safety of the convoy system as compared to the dispersion system (see p. 640, printed testimony):

(2) It appears that the system of protection for convoys now in operation is efficient so far as the resources available permit. The losses of vessels in convoy to the losses of vessels not in convoy is at present about 1 to 20.

In his letter of April 19, 1917, to the Navy Department Rear Admiral Sims said (see p. 31, printed testimony):

15. It is insistently asked (was asked by myself) why shipping is not directed to and concentrated at various rendezvous and from these convoyed through the dangerous areas. The answer is the same—the area is too large; the necessary vessels are not available.

16. However, I am now consulting with the director of shipping as to the practicability and advisability of attempting some approach to this plan in case the United States is able to put in operation sufficient tonnage to warrant it.

17. After trying various methods of controlling shipping the Admiralty now believes the best policy to be one of dispersion.

* * * * * * *

20. The Admiralty has had frequent conferences with merchant masters and sought their advice. Their most unanimous demand is "give us a gun and let us look out for ourselves." They are also insistent that it is impracticable for merchant vessels to proceed in formation, at least in any considerable numbers, due principally to difficulty in controlling their speed or to the inexperience of their subordinate officers. With this view I do not personally agree but believe that with a little experience merchant vessels could safely and sufficiently well steam in open formation.

The point of view of some in the British Admiralty regarding the inauguration of a convoy system is authoritatively expressed in the following quotation from Admiral Lord Jellicoe's book, "The Crisis of the Naval War," in which he says:

Shortly after my taking up the post of First Sea Lord at the Admiralty, at the end of 1916, the question [of convoying] was discussed once more. At that time the danger of attack by enemy raiders on shipping in the North Atlantic was small; the protection needed was against attack by submarines, and the dangerous area commenced some 300 or 400 miles from the British Islands. It was known that unrestricted submarine warfare was about to commence, and that this would mean that shipping would usually be subjected to torpedo attack from submarines when in a submerged condition. Against this form of attack the gun armament of cruisers or armed merchant ships was practically useless, and, however powerfully armed, ships of this type were themselves in peril of being torpedoed. Small vessels of shallow draft, possessing high speed, offered the only practicable form of protection. Shallow draft was necessary in order that the protecting vessels should themselves be comparatively immune from successful torpedo fire, and speed was essential for offensive operations against the submarines (p. 103).

* * * * * * *

For the introduction of a system of convoy, which would protect merchant ships as far as their port of discharge in the United Kingdom, there were two requirements: (*a*) A sufficient number of convoying cruisers or armed merchant ships, whose rôle would be that of bringing the ships comprising the convoy to some selected rendezvous outside the zone of submarine activity, where it would be met by the flotilla of small vessels which would protect the convoy through the submarine area. It was essential that the ships of the convoy should arrive at this rendezvous as an organized unit, well practiced in station keeping by day and at night, with the ships darkened, and that the vessels should be capable also of zigzagging together and of carrying out such necessary movements as alterations of course, etc.; otherwise the convoy could not be safely escorted through the danger area. (*b*) The other essential was the presence of the escorting flotilla in sufficient strength. (p. 110.)

It has been mentioned that there was an insufficient number of vessels available for use as convoying cruisers. It was estimated that about 50 cruisers or armed merchant ships would be required for this service if the homeward-bound trade to the British Isles alone was considered. An additional 12 vessels would be necessary to deal with the outward-bound trade. At the time only 18 vessels were available, and these could only be obtained by denuding the North Atlantic entirely of cruisers. (p. 111.)

The situation in regard to destroyers or other fast vessels presented equal difficulties. Early in February, 1917, we had available for general convoy or patrol work only 14 destroyers stationed at Devonport and 12 sloops at Queenstown, and, owing to repairs and the necessity of resting officers and men periodically, only a proportion of these were available at any one time. A number of these vessels were required to escort troop transports through the submarine danger zone. During the month of February 6 sloops were diverted from their proper work of mine sweeping in the North Sea and added to the patrol force at Queenstown, and 8 destroyers were taken from the Grand Fleet and sent to southern waters for patrol and escort duty. There were obvious objections to this weakening of the North Sea forces, but it was necessary in the circumstances to ignore them. (p. 111.)

This total of 40 destroyers and sloops represented the whole available force at the end of February. Simultaneously a careful investigation showed that for the institution of a system of convoy and escort for homeward-bound Atlantic trade alone to the United Kingdom our requirements would be 81 destroyers or sloops and 48 trawlers (the latter vessels being only suitable for escorting the slow 6 to 7 knot ships of the trade from Gibraltar to the United Kingdom). For the outward Atlantic trade from the United Kingdom our estimated requirements were 44 additional destroyers or sloops. (p. 111.)

In other words, in order to swing the anitsubmarine work over from the patrol system, which had proven itself to be ineffective, to a comprehensive convoy system, Admiral Lord Jellicoe states in effect that 62 cruisers and 173 antisubmarine vessels were requisite, but that there were available only 18 cruisers and 40 antisubmarine vessels, leaving a deficit of 44 cruisers and 133 antisubmarine craft.

It was in the face of such a dearth of British convoying vessels, in the face of opinion at the Admiralty that the best policy for controlling shipping was one of dispersion, and in the face of the almost unanimous opinion of British merchant captains that they could not navigate in convoy formation, that, as the evidence shows, Rear Admiral Sims succeeded in obtaining first an experimental convoy from Gibraltar to England and then the gradual extension of the system.

But the evidence shows that when he had succeeded in overcoming these objections in England, Rear Admiral Sims received through the British Admiralty a dispatch from the Navy Department, Office of Naval Operations, dated 18 June, 1917, which concluded with the following paragraph:

Regarding convoy I consider that American vessels with armed guards on board are safer when sailing independently. (See pp. 46 and 2111–2114, printed testimony.)

In the testimony there was a dispute as to whether this dispatch was signed "Daniels," as it was received by Rear Admiral Sims, or whether it was issued on the authority of Admiral Benson, Chief of Naval Operations. The more material point is that at that late date the Navy Department was in favor of the independent sailing of American vessels, presumably transport as well as merchantmen, with only the protection of armed guards on board, rather than in organized antisubmarine convoys. Presumably, be it Secretary Daniels or Admiral Benson who was responsible, had the Navy Department been left to carry out its opinions, the marvelously efficient convoy system whereby our troops were transported would not have been inaugurated until after appalling losses. Admiral Lord Jellicoe comments on this dispatch in the following laconic terms:

We were pressing the United States to strengthen our escorting forces as far as possible in order to extend the convoy system, when a telegram arrived from Washington to the effect that it was considered that ships which were armed were safer when sailing singly than when in convoy.[1]

[1] Jellicoe, "The Crisis of the Naval War," p. 157.

The following message exhibits the point of view of the Navy Department as to convoy as late as July, 1917. (See p. 155, printed testimony.)

Received July 9. 1917.

209. Following from Navy Department for Admiral Sims:

Future cross-water operations concerning safe transportation of our troops to France is one of the most important operations of future. For this purpose every guarantee has been given to War Department that every effort will be made by the Navy Department to safeguard lives of the soldiers in crossing. From the interned German ships, 14 of the fastest, largest and best will be commissioned, under complete naval control, and used to take over the troops. It is of the utmost importance these ships should receive greatest protection on the passage in (that is, back to the United States), and owing to the valuable nature of ships and difficulty of obtaining others in their place if lost, it is desirable to guard them on passage in Atlantic. Will you therefore submit an outline of what you consider the best method of carrying out such operations after you have consulted various authorities, especially the French? ("They—the French—had only five destroyers on the west coast, and on the night of May 21, 1917, I had personally seen four of them put out of action for weeks or months to come, in a destroyer fight off Dunkirk").[1] About 4,000 troops will be dispatched in each ship. *Do you think that they should sail in company or singly?*[2]

It should be realized that the evidence shows by a large number of dispatches that during the initial transportation of troops the Navy Department, without accurate information as to allied and enemy naval conditions in western European waters, attempted to fix from Washington through Paris, London and Queenstown, the details regarding routing and escorting of troop transports and it was only upon protest that the above inquiry for suggestions from Rear Admiral Sims was made. It was also shown by the testimony that initial detailed regulations for troop transportation, including their protection in the war zone, had been agreed upon by the War and Navy Departments on the 26th day of May, 1917, signed by Gen. Bliss and Admiral Benson and approved by Secretaries Baker and Daniels on that date, and further approved by President Wilson on the 27th of May, 1917; but that Rear Admiral Sims did not receive a copy of these official regulations from the Navy Department until the 30th day of October, 1917, although on him rested the responsibility of executing them during the summer. (See p. 144, printed testimony.)

Referring back to the request from the Navy Department for suggestions as to troop transportation received by Rear Admiral Sims on the 9th of July, the evidence shows that on July 6, 1917, he had written to the Secretary of the Navy a very long and detailed letter, as a culmination of his dispatches, giving the suggestions requested. (See pp. 156–159, printed testimony.)

Upon receipt of this letter the department in Washington cabled Rear Admiral Sims as follows (see p. 160, printed testimony):

Your letter No. 17. Rules for convoy therein accepted and will govern.

It may be said, therefore, that not only did Rear Admiral Sims overcome such opposition as existed to the convoy system in the British Admiralty and on the part of British merchant masters, but that the Navy Department in Washington opposed the convoy system into June, then attempted to regulate its details, while not having adequate data and, while failing to advise the Commander of the United States Naval Forces Operating in European Waters of its regu-

[1] Inserted extract from report of U. S. Naval Attaché at Paris. See pp. 153–154, printed testimony.
[2] Italics are not in the original text.

lations, though expecting him to carry them out, that the Navy Department, realizing its incompetence, then sought his advice which had been previously, repeatedly and insistently given, and at last accepted as the plan of operations what in effect he had long been advising.

From the foregoing it would seem that shortly after his arrival in England Rear Admiral Sims overcame such effective opposition to the convoy system as existed then in the British Admiralty. Later the more persistent opposition to it in the American Navy Department was overcome.

In view of the fact that soon after his arrival in London Rear Admiral Sims reported the consensus of opinion in the Admiralty as against the convoy system and at the same time reported his own disagreement with this opinion, stating some of his reasons and some of his initial steps to start the convoy system, it would seem logical and proper to attribute to him the initiative that resulted in the inauguration of the convoy system. His initiative in this matter and his persistence in its subsequent development, therefore, would seem to be at the source of the great results in the preservation of lives and of tonnage that came from the substitution of the "convoy system" for the earlier "dispersion system." This was one of the most important American contributions to the winning of the war. (See ante, pp. 61–63, and 65 and 66.)

The bearing of the convoy system upon the saving of tonnage from sinkings by submarines is shown in some measure by the following tabulation:

Total sinking by submarines only.

	Number of vessels.[1]	Gross tonnage.[1]	Period.
1917.			
February	259	467,751	First period: "When American aid was lacking and ships were not being convoyed."[2] Average sinkings per month, 582,900 gross tons.
March	325	500,699	
April	423	846,863	
May	320	551,778	
June	314	628,249	
July	240	502,058	
Total	1,881	3,497,398	
August	185	488,072	Second period: "When there was a partial employment of the convoy system and moderate assistance from America."[2] Average sinkings per month, 354,666 gross tons.
September	174	332,254	
October	160	452,108	
November	105	200,903	
December	151	354,374	
1918.			
January	140	300,283	
Total	915	2,127,994	
February	121	309,839	Third period: "When full cooperation was given by America, and consequently full use could be made of the convoy system."[2] Average sinkings per month, 237,232 gross tons.
March	170	326,263	
April	115	267,809	
May	135	291,438	
June	107	241,907	
July	100	260,865	
August	148	280,689	
September	86	187,385	
October	60	109,876	
November (to the 11th)	2	10,195	
Total	1,044	2,206,266	
Grand total	3,840	7,831,658	

[1] See p. 1484, printed testimony.

[2] See p. 36, printed testimony.

In the foregoing table attention is invited particularly to the "Average sinkings per month" for each one of the three periods into which the tabulation is divided. During the first period of six months of unrestricted submarine warfare the average sinkings per month were nearly 600,000 tons—this when there was little antisubmarine aid from the United States and little convoying. During the second period, that of partial convoying and moderate aid, the average sinkings dropped almost to 350,000 tons per month. And during the final period, with full aid and full use of the convoy system, the sinkings dropped to below 240,000 tons per month. When it is recalled that Germany set such store by the efficacy of an unrestricted submarine campaign that she was not deterred from it by the practical certainty that it would entrain American participation in the war, it is not to be supposed that the German effort was allowed to slacken during the second period—which was that in which she counted on victory.

But while the German submarine *effort* undoubtedly remained unabated in the second period, its *results* in that period were only about 61 per cent of those obtained before the convoy system was put into even partial operation. And when, in the third period, the convoy system had come into full use, the results of the submarine effort dropped to but about 41 per cent of those obtained before there were any convoys. And it should be added that a large part of the sinkings during the third period were of vessels after they had broken convoy near their destination and of coastal rather than high-seas vessels.

Yet these results are not so remarkable when it is recalled that, instead of permitting torpedo attack against vessels practically defenseless against it, the convoy system obliged submarines to attack a unit comprising especial antisubmarine vessels.

It may be well to revert at this point to statements previously made herein,[1] citing testimony that on January 1, 1917, there was available 31,000,000 tons of shipping and that the "absolute minimum of tonnage necessary to the allied cause" was 26,500,000 tons, and pointing out that by April, 1918, they were reduced to within 641,000 of this amount. In order to realize the bearing of the decrease in sinking due to the inauguration of the convoy system attention is invited to the following two tables. The first one, starting with 31,000,000 tons available on January 1, 1917, and applying thereto the actual losses and increments of new tonnage as obtained from the tabulation given on page 25 hereof, shows that by March 31, 1918, the total available tonnage was reduced to 27,142,044 tons, or to but 642,000 tons' margin over the minimum requisite of 26,500,000 tons.

Actual decrease in tonnage Jan. 1, 1917, to Mar. 31, 1918.

	Available tonnage at beginning of quarter.	Sinkings of quarter.	New tonnage of quarter.	Net loss of quarter.	Balance of tonnage available at end of quarter.
January, February, March	31,100,000	1,619,373	587,046	1,032,327	30,068,673
April, May, June	30,068,673	2,236,934	685,048	1,551,886	28,516,787
July, August, September	28,516,787	1,494,473	675,061	819,412	27,697,375
October, November, December	27,697,375	1,272,843	990,631	282,212	27,415,163
January, February, March	27,415,163	1,143,336	870,317	273,019	27,142,044

[1] See ante, pp. 67 and 68.

The following table starts with the actual tonnage available on the 1st of July, 1917—that is, 28,516,787 tons—and carries the losses and increments of new tonnage through as in the previous table except that the assumption is made that during August, September, October, November, and December, 1917, and January, 1918, the monthly losses by submarines would have averaged 582,900 tons per month—that is, that during what we have called the second period, when the convoy system was in partial use, the sinkings had been kept up to the average actually maintained during what we have called the first period during which dispersion instead of convoy was used:

Hypothetical decrease in tonnage, July 1, 1917, to Jan. 31, 1918.

	Available tonnage at beginning of each month.	Sinkings during each month.	New tonnage during each month.*	Net loss during each month.	Balance of tonnage available at end of each month.
July	28,516,787	502,058	225,020	277,038	28,239,749
August	28,239,749	582,900	225,020	357,880	27,881,869
September	27,881,869	582,900	225,020	357,880	27,523,989
October	27,523,989	582,900	330,210	252,690	27,271,299
November	27,271,299	582,900	330,210	252,690	27,018,609
December	27,018,609	582,900	330,210	252,690	26,765,919
January	26,765,919	582,900	290,106	292,794	26,473,125

* Monthly figures are averages for corresponding quarters as given in previous table.

Evidently had the submarine campaign maintained during the second period results but equal to those actually obtained by it during the first period, the total tonnage available would have fallen below the "absolute minimum of tonnage necessary to the allied cause" in January, 1918. And it should be added that this is an understatement, as the average used, 582,900 tons, is for sinkings by submarines only, whereas the actual average losses from all causes was 640,000 tons per month. (See p. 36, printed testimony.) It follows that had it not been for the substitution of the convoy system for that of dispersion, the total available tonnage would have fallen below the "absolute minimum of tonnage necessary" prior to the end of December, 1917.

As on that last date we had less than 200,000 troops in Europe,[1] it is difficult to see how the American Expeditionary Forces could have been of any great military service in France during 1918 if the adoption of the convoy system had not been secured in spite of initial opposition in the Admiralty at London and longer maintained opposition and mismanagement in the Navy Department at Washington.

In closing this review of the convoy system it may not be inappropriate to give some figures of the volume of shipping handled under it.

Atlantic convoys.[2]

	Convoys.	Ships convoyed.
Organized by American authorities	350	2,123
Organized by British authorities	1,124	16,530
Total	1,474	18,653

[1] See ante, p. 55.
[2] See p. 11, Report of Rear Admiral Sims to Navy Department, March, 1919.

It appears from the evidence that there were a total of 1,142 ship sailings in the transport of American troops.[1] It would seem, therefore, that of the total ships convoyed about 5 per cent (1,142) were troop transports and about 95 per cent (17,653) were engaged in the transport of civil and military supplies and sustenance. While of course the safe transportation of troops was of primary concern, yet the large volume of nontroop transportation makes evident the magnitude and importance of this latter work in view of the fact that the very transportation of troops as well as the maintenance of civil populations depended directly on the preservation of tonnage.

That of the total of 2,066,442 American troops transported to Europe but 747 [2] (or but one out of every 2,766) were lost at sea, while none were lost under American convoy, constitutes an unprecedented accomplishment.

While the inauguration and operation of the convoy system and the delay of the Navy Department in connection therewith were the most important points brought out by the investigation in connection with the conduct of the war, there were a number of other matters examination into which showed improper coordination between the Navy Department in Washington and the advanced headquarters in London. To review all such matters adequately would necessitate too lengthy a discussion. Yet it would seem proper to touch upon (*a*) the sending of battleships to operate in European waters, (*b*) the organization of convoy escort and plans against a cruiser raid, and (*c*) the North Sea mine barrage.

BATTLESHIPS TO OPERATE IN EUROPEAN WATERS.

In his first dispatch of April 14, 1917, sent four days after his arrival in London, Rear Admiral Sims said:

> At present our battleships can serve no useful purpose in this area except that two divisions of dreadnoughts might be based on Brest for moral effect against anticipated raids by heavy enemy ships in the Channel out of reach of British main fleet (See p. 29, printed testimony.)

Though this suggestion was amplified in his letter of April 19, 1917, no answer to it was ever received from the Navy Department. (See pp. 33 and 73, printed testimony.)

It would seem that conditions changed in such a way as to no longer make the execution of this suggestion desirable, for we find that when plans against raiders were being discussed a year later it was considered advisable to prepare against raiders issuing only from the northern entrance to the North Sea or from the Mediterranean but not through the Straits of Dover. (See p. 173, printed testimony.) It might be said, however, that the prompt carrying out of this suggestion, at least in part, would have been a step toward the execution of other requirements which developed for American battleships in European waters.

The call for these is described as follows in the testimony of Rear Admiral Sims, whose statements in this matter have remained uncontroverted (see pp. 74–76, printed testimony):

> It was at about this time that the question of reinforcing the Grand Fleet with a division of our coal-burning battleships was taken up with me by Admiral Jellicoe.

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[1] See p. 2144, printed testimony.
[2] See p. 14, report of Rear Admiral Sims to Navy Department, March, 1919.

At his request, I went with him to the Grand Fleet on July 19, for a conference with Admiral Beatty. As a result of this conference, I sent the following message to the Navy Department:

[Cablegram sent July 21,1917.]

To SECRETARY OF THE NAVY (OPERATIONS). Serial No. 120:

No. 120. Visited Grand Fleet 19th with Admiral Jellicoe for consideration with commander in chief. The result is that Admiralty request that the four strongest coal-burning battleships with six destroyers be sent join Grand Fleet now in Firth of Forth. Also that our submarines could be very usefully employed in antisubmarine campaign.

The reasons for this request is that five *King Edward* class must be placed out of commission and their place taken by four dreadnaughts to provide officers and gunnery and torpedo rating for light cruisers, destroyers, submarines, etc., to be commissioned. Shortage of officers will be found 100 after advancing reserve officers from motor boats, etc., to fleet. Our oil-burning battleships could not be supplied, and more than four would unduly increase burden on coal supply and would necessitate additional screening vessels not now available.

The conference agreed that moral effect would be very great, also mutual benefit of exchange of ideas and methods. The intelligence service thereby created between the two fleets would be superior to any service which exists or could be established. Carefully selected expert staff should be sent. Also recommend temporary detail representative our commander in chief on Admiral Beatty's staff.

SIMS.

No answer was received to this message. After waiting for four weeks, believing that an answer to such an important recommendation would ultimately come, I finally sent a second message on August 17:

(Sims, Admiral, United States, 285.)

AUGUST 17, 1917.

Referring to No. 120. Need becoming urgent for the four coal-burning dreadnaughts and their six destroyers; shortage of personnel has necessitated putting one *King Edward* out of commission. One goes out next month and five by end of year. In their absence, reinforcements are requested; these vessels must be replaced by older type of dreadnaughts from Grand Fleet. Request information as to department's decision. 18217.

SIMS.

That requires a little explanation as to why they would have to be replaced with more than one. This *King Edward* was employed elsewhere. They had to keep a certain number in the neighborhood of the Thames and the Humber to guard against raids, and if they put them out of commission, they would have to be replaced from the older dreadnaughts from the Grand Fleet. That is why they wanted us.

In reply, the Navy Department cabled me on August 20 their refusal to approve this recommendation. Their dispatch was as follows:

AUGUST 20, 1917.

Received for: Admiral Sims.
From: Chief of Naval Operations.
Opnav 198.

Replying to your 285, United States believes that the strategic situation necessitates keeping battleship force concentrated (that is, our battleship force), and can not therefore consider the suggestion of sending a part of it across. The logistics of the situation would prevent the entire force going over, except in case of extreme necessity. The department desires that you discuss situation with Admiral Mayo upon arrival. 10019.

ADMIRAL BENSON.

In a letter of September 1 to Admiral Benson, I again urged the sending of this reinforcement:

To: Admiral Benson, September 1, 1917. (Admiral Sims's personal file.)

There is one thing about which I am really anxious and that is as to the final decision of the Navy Department in sending to this side the battleship reinforcements which the situation in the Grand Fleet requires. As you know, I do not understand what is really meant by the disintegration of our fleet. I do not see how it will ever be possible for it to engage in a combined operation, as a unit, with the naval forces of the Allies. For example, in all of the schemes that I have seen proposed for aggression

against the enemy, the naval forces of the Allies have been distributed according to types. The scheme proposed by Winston Churchill required the organization of two fleets, each composed of certain types of British, French, and American vessels. Another proposal for blocking the enemy fleet in port would require the sacrifice of certain of the older battleships and cruisers of all three nations to block the channels leading to German ports.

I have explained in my cables and letters why it is that the British Fleet needs a reenforcement of some of our dreadnaughts. I can not see that the sending of this division of ships would be any disintegration of our fleet, but merely an advance force interposed between us and the enemy fleet.

No man can tell what the outcome of this war will be. But whatever the outcome proves to be, we must at the end find ourselves in a position which can be justified on sound military principles. Can we afford to have history record that the Allies asked for reinforcements and that we declined to send them?

Admiral Benson replied on the 24th of September. I will read you the extract of his letter with regard to the battleships:

[From Admiral Benson, Sept, 24, 1917.]

"We are not willing to send a portion of the battleship force, and do not intend to unless very much stronger arguments are produced than have so far been set forth. It has been a surprise and disappointment that no definite plan of operation of the combined forces of the allied naval powers has been taken up and decided upon long ere this. I consider this most urgent, and it certainly should be done at the earliest possible date, and if nothing can be done this fall or winter, preparations should be actively under way to carry out some definite plan of operation as soon as spring of 1918 opens."

When Admiral Benson himself arrived in November, 1917, this was one of the first subjects discussed with him, and after he had conferred with the British naval authorities and satisfied himself, which he did inside of a few hours, he sent, within two or three days, his No. 13683, department, recommending that a division of four coal-burning dreadnaughts be sent immediately. This was on November 8.

On November 13 the reply was received by Admiral Benson from the Secretary of the Navy granting his request, without discussion, and stating that the ships, after docking, would be ready to sail about November 25. This cablegram speaks for itself (reading):

(Cablegram received November 13, 1917.)

SIMS, Admiral, United States:

1093. From Secretary of Navy for Admiral Benson: After consultation with Admiral Mayo, that following coal-burning dreadnaughts were selected to form divisions to be dispatched to England: U. S. S. *New York*, U. S. S. *Florida*, U. S. S. *Delaware*, U. S. S. *Wyoming*.

These ships, after docking, should be ready to sail about November 25. Rear Admiral Rodman will command this division. 17012.

BENSON.

That is the message I received on November 13, 1917.

"It was the practice of the Navy Department for cablegrams coming from the department to be signed 'Benson.' He was on the other side, but this was signed 'Benson.' It might be interesting to state the fact that all of those vessels were of different types. One of them had 14-inch guns and the others 12's. They could just as easily have selected a homogeneous squadron, but it was not done. The reason was that they were not ready for sea service."

Comment on the lack of cooperation by the Navy Department with Rear Admiral Sims and with the Allies, as shown in this episode, would be superfluous.

CONVOY PROTECTION AGAINST CRUISER RAIDS.

Convoys and shipping were liable to attack not only by submarines but by such surface raiders as the *Mowe* and the *Wolf*, which together sank over 200,000 tons. (See p. 168, printed testimony.) The preventive against the escape of such vessels from Germany lay only in

the thoroughness of the surface naval blockade of the North Sea, for the preponderance of the Grand Fleet there was essential not only in order to contain the German high seas fleet but in order to give surface command of the North Sea for patrol purposes against the attempts of raiders to escape. (See p. 168, printed testimony.)

This situation was called to the attention of the Navy Department by Rear Admiral Sims repeatedly during the summer of 1917. (See p. 166, printed testimony.) In a letter to the department on October 23, 1917, he said (see p. 168, printed testimony):

Action against enemy raiders is to be considered from two points of view: First, operations to intercept them before they reach the open sea; second, arrangements to protect shipping if the first can not be made effective.

As long as Norway remains neutral, we must certainly expect that her neutral waters will be utilized by raiders, particularly on the long, dark nights of winter, and if this is permitted it is practically impossible in view of the large sea areas to the northward, even around the north of Iceland, to prevent the escape of raiders.

From the general survey of the situation it is considered very impracticable that the escape of raiders during winter months can be prevented. During these months there is over 20 hours of darkness in northern waters which would be used for escape.

The only apparent effective solution would seem to be the consignment with each convoy of a force superior to that which may be expected on raiders.

Rear Admiral Sims followed up this letter with another one to the Secretary of the Navy on the 3d of November, 1917, in which he said (see pp. 168, 169, 170, printed testimony):

1. The three things that endanger our troop transports are:

(*a*) Submarines and mines encountered in the (war) zone.

(*b*) Raiders on the high seas.

(*c*) Large submarines operating outside of the zone.

8. * * * Since the convoy system has been established, resulting in a partial defeat of the submarine, it is not at all unlikely that the enemy may meet this situation by dispatching a greater number of raiders of greater speed and power. * * *

12. My recommendations are these:

(*a*) That a limited number of destroyers be retained in the United States for escorting our troops off shore, so as to protect them against any large submarine that may be operating off the port of embarkation.

(*b*) That the routes of our convoys be varied so as to deny the enemy information of any one line of approach.

(*c*) That an ocean escort be provided sufficient to withstand any raider that escaped to sea. This will mean a dreadnaught in the event that we get information of the escape of enemy battle cruisers or else sailings will have to be temporarily suspended.

(*d*) That all escorting vessels should have guns superior to 6-inch.

(*e*) That all convoys be routed through the North Atlantic, as before.

(*f*) That any destroyers be released that can be spared for operations on this side, so that greater protection can be given in the area where the danger is greatest.

In the spring of 1918 it had become apparent that the submarine campaign against shipping was being defeated, and the allied naval staffs again became apprehensive that the Germans might, as a last venture, send out their battle cruisers in the hope of meeting and completely destroying some of our troop convoys. The planning section of the staff of Rear Admiral Sims, having the fullest detailed knowledge of conditions in the war zone, therefore drew up counter-raider plans in conjunction with the planning division of the British Admiralty and they were forwarded to Washington on the 20th of June, 1918. On the 2d of July the following cable was received by Rear Admiral Sims (see p. 171, printed testimony):

SIMSADUS.

Simben 3. Your 307. As last hope. German battle cruisers may be sent out to completely destroy one of our large troop convoys. We depend upon you to gain and

give information on this point and Grand Fleet to take necessary action until United States could act. 11001. Simben 3.

BENSON.

And on July 30, 1918, the Navy Department in Washington outlined a new and complete plan of their own for the protection of shipping against battle-cruiser raid. Of this Rear Admiral Sims says (see pp. 173, 174, and 175):

Briefly stated, the department's plan provided that one division of battleships was to be stationed at Queenstown, to cover the eastern area of the Atlantic. Another division was to he held at home waters to cover the western Atlantic. A division of Japanese battle cruisers was to be requested to base on a United States port and conduct direct search operations. Upon the warning being given, eastbound convoys in certain general sea areas were to return to the nearest United States or Canadian port. All convoys in the eastern part of the Atlantic were to proceed to destination; while convoys in mid-Atlantic were to be diverted immediately to the Azores. For westbound shipping about the same procedure reversed was to apply. After the battle cruiser was out, in fact, after the trouble was on, another division of battleships was to be detailed to escort any troop convoys which were then to move. The plan was to become effective only after receipt of information that the battle cruiser had, in fact, escaped from the North Sea.

The plan was impracticable for numerous reasons, and it was eventually abandoned with the full concurrence of the Navy Department and before any necessity for its application arose; for it was substituted a plan substantially the same as that previously recommended by the (London) planning section.

I will explain briefly some of the undesirable features of the department's plan:

(*a*) Most serious of all, it was not a joint plan—that is, it provided for American troops and shipping only—a small portion of the whole—and could not be made applicable to all allied shipping. One can imagine the confusion in the Atlantic of attempting to handle allied convoys and shipping with conflicting wireless instructions by other than a joint plan.

(*b*) It upset the whole delicate allied machinery for providing destroyer escort to the submarine zone. That is, in attempting to guard against an enemy battle cruiser raid it subjected shipping to added and unnecessary risk of destruction by submarines. It was quite impossible for the department to know of the extensive and delicately adjusted system in London for providing protection against submarines for all allied shipping. The system was constantly changing as new forces or additional convoys were added.

(*c*) It was based on an erroneous premise, namely, that we could be sure of counting on advance knowledge of the escape of a battle cruiser. I had repeatedly reported that the Allies could not guarantee any such information. While we could and did track the progress of submarines quite accurately, a battle cruiser at high speed could make its escape from the North Sea in one night, taking advantage of fog or heavy weather, with small chance of being detected.

(*d*) If a false alarm of the escape of a raider were given, and such a case actually occurred after the latter plan had been adopted, the system of controlling shipping would be so deranged that it could not be put back into normal operation for some time. Consequently, there would be increased opportunities for submarines to attack unescorted convoys and shipping, as well as unnecessary delay to shipping.

I would like to invite attention at that point to one of the gravest dangers that can be inflicted upon the people who are doing the fighting by the people at headquarters; that is, that they at headquarters should, in the pride of intellect, draw up a plan to be executed by the people at the front and thereby incur the danger of drawing up that plan on a false premise. That was done twice during the war. In one case it is my conviction that it cost us at least half a million tons of shipping. It was the premise which enabled them to draw up the perfectly erroneous estimate of the situation that one of the best things to do was to depend upon arming merchant shipping; and it was that which caused the delay of the convoy system for approximately three months. The false premise in this case—and it was exceedingly dangerous—was that we would be sure to be able to tell them when the battle cruiser went out of the North Sea. As a matter of fact,we never were sure; the premise was wholly false. Consequently, the estimate of the situation was wholly false; and consequently the department's plan was wholly impracticable. If that lesson can come out of all this trouble and expense we have gone through, it will be something that will be of value to the United States Navy and this Government in the future.

Throughout August the Navy Department at Washington insisted on its plan and Rear Admiral Sims in his testimony says (see p. 179, printed testimony):

The first intimation of the probability of a German battle-cruiser raid was manifest at the end of August, 1918, when information was received simultaneously from a variety of sources that two heavily armored cruisers might soon attempt to enter the Atlantic to attack American troop convoys. In the face of this we had no plan, although plans had been urged since September, 1917.

After further discussion between Washington and London, the staffs of Rear Admiral Sims and of the Admiralty in London jointly drew up a plan which was forwarded to Washington on September 10, 1918, and approved by the Navy Department on the 21st of September, 1918. Of this Rear Admiral Sims says (see pp. 180–183, printed testimony):

This plan was simple and in substance was identical with my previous recommendations.

Briefly stated, it was that the moment any possibility of a raid developed the battleships at both ends of the line would put to sea and pick up and escort the nearest convoys believed to be in danger; that as far as possible and in order to make up for the lack of battleships an attempt would be made to combine convoys; that the department would control all shipping in the western Atlantic and the British Admiralty all in the eastern Atlantic by direct radio communication with the convoys and battleships; that the battleship escorts would not attempt to complete passage, but those in the eastern area, after reaching a central point, would pick up an eastbound convoy and return. It contained many other details as to methods of routing, control, and communication. Generally speaking, however, all convoys were to keep going. The scheme of diversion to Azores was abandoned.

The department finally recognized the impossibility of carrying out their own plan, for on September 21, 1918, I received a dispatch informing me that they had accepted the plan that I had proposed and which I have just explained.

* * * * * * *

Fortunately, the enemy never attempted a battle-cruiser raid. To anyone at all familiar with the case it is, to put it mildly, disquieting to contemplate the confusion of all Atlantic shipping, naval and merchant, troop carriers, and all, which would have resulted if a raid had occurred during those long-drawn-out negotiations between Washington and London in an attempt to reach a simple decision as to joint action.

As far back as September, 1917, the danger had been pointed out and the necessity for plans stressed. Ten months later, although plans had been proposed, when the danger was thought to be really imminent, the department acknowledged that it had no approved plans, and said that it depended upon the European forces and upon the British Grand Fleet to stand off the danger until they had time to act. Even after the department had been aroused to the necessities for a joint plan, and had put forward one which was not really a joint plan and was wholly impracticable, it took nearly two solid months to solve a problem which was easily susceptible of solution in a few hours of personal conference.

In May, 1918, the headquarters planning section had, in collaboration with the British, prepared a definite plan. This was submitted to the department in June. About September 1, a month after the department had submitted its impracticable plan (which was never adopted and which was not agreed to by either the British or the American planning sections in London), it insisted on its plan and directed that it be put into effect, notwithstanding the fact that the majority of shipping involved was not United States shipping, but that other forces than our own were required to put the plan in execution.

If the enemy had only known, all he need have done during those two months was to make a series of bluffs, involving little risk to himself, and we would have done the rest. Shipping would have been paralyzed.

In conclusion I wish to reiterate the salient point in this case I am presenting. It is not that foreign navy departments had abler officers than ours, nor that the officers of my London staff were abler than their brother officers in Washington, but that our Navy Department violated sound military principles in attempting to run a joint campaign over a 3,000-mile cable. This, notwithstanding that the department had in London an organization established by the department for the express purpose of preparing joint plans and coordinating with the Allies, all of whom maintained similar organizations in London to facilitate unity of command.

NORTH SEA MINE BARRAGE.

So much emphasis during the investigation was laid on the North Sea mine barrage by witnesses for the Navy Department—and especially by the Secretary of the Navy—that it seems appropriate to describe it in some detail.

Prior to the entrance of the United States into the war the scheme of placing a practically continuous mine field between the northern end of the Island of Great Britain and the coast of Norway had been discussed. The object was thereby to close the northern exit of the North Sea to submarines. But no action had been taken to materialize this scheme because it would have required several hundred thousand mines of the type then available, the production of which did not exceed 10,000 per month, and most of which were more urgently needed for the mine fields off the German naval bases and in the Straits of Dover. (See pp. 190, 191, 192, printed testimony.)

On April 15, 1917, Capt. S. P. Fullinwider submitted to the Navy Department a memorandum proposing the containing of the enemy submarines by mine barriers in which he estimated that 750,000 mines would be needed for an effective barrage across the northern outlet of the North Sea and a further 250,000 mines for a similar barrage at its southern end and across the Adriatic and Dardanelles. His memorandum concluded as follows (see pp. 1373, 1375, and 1376, printed testimony):

38. By getting 20 factories to produce 1,000 per day each, these mines could be manufactured in 50 days.

39. On the basis of 50 pounds of T. N. T. per mine, there would be required 50,000,000 pounds of T. N. T. or equivalent explosive.

40. There would be required at least 40,000,000 feet of steel wire rope for mooring the mines.

41. These figures are given to indicate the magnitude of the work of preparation if any such plan is to be adopted and to show the necessity of immediate definition of policy. If an immediate decision should be made, *the proposed barrier scheme could not be put into effect inside of six months.*[1]

S. P. FULLINWIDER.

And his memorandum carries the following pertinent clause (see p. 1374):

10. The result of the war hangs upon the submarine issue. Germany will win the war if she can continue the rapid diminution of merchant shipping. The only hope of the Allies (including America) lies in finding some means to curb the effectiveness of the submarine and replacing lost ships, *and any further delay will be fatal.*[1]

Almost a month later the Secretary took the first step in this matter toward the representative of the Navy Department in the war zone by sending the following cable (see p. 188, printed testimony):

From: Secretary of the Navy.
To: Rear Admiral Sims.
Received May 11, 1917.

Much opinion here is in favor of concerted efforts by the Allies to establish a complete barrier across the North Sea, Norway, and Scotland, either direct or via the Shetlands, to prevent the egress of German submarines. This plan would involve the use of various forms of mines, nets, patrols, and the release for this purpose of all ships upon American coast patrols, as well as many vessels of the Allies now employed elsewhere. The plan also involves regulations for the commerce of Holland and Scandinavian

[1] Italics are not in original text.

neutrals to pass barriers and defined control gates. It also includes closing Norway's territorial waters. The difficulty and size of the problem is recognized, but if it is possible of accomplishment the situation would warrant the effort. If this plan is not feasible, could not the same plan be carried out between Denmark and Norway across the Skaggerack? Make full report.

In reply to this Rear Admiral Sims sent a long cable, of which the following are perhaps the more essential statements (see p. 189, printed testimony):

Sent: May 14, 1917.
To: Secretary of the Navy.

* * * The general situation is as follows, based upon full conference with British Admiralty. * * * Mine barriers can not be wholly effective, unless they could be maintained by patrol at all points. * * * the necessarily locally weak dispersed line of patrols can be broken by enemy concentrated attacks at any point and as often as may be necessary, and mines dragged out, thus releasing submarines. A barrage that can be thus broken at will by concentrated attack is ineffective. This subject was fully explained in my letter of May 11, now on the way. * * * Bitter and extensive experience has forced the abandonment of any serious attempt at blockading such passages as Scotland to Norway, Scotland to Shetlands, Skaggerack. * * * Mined area much too extensive for all to be patrolled, hence no definite knowledge of number of submarines destroyed or damaged by mines. Speaking generally, the primary immediate necessity in numbers of patrol craft, and, as previously reported, too much stress can not be laid upon the urgency of reinforcing the allied antisubmarine forces to the extreme possible limit. Defensive measures on our own coast, or in any other locality, and in fact all defensive considerations, should be subordinated to the offensive against the submarines where they are operating. * * *

The element of time is all important. The need is for destroyers, antisubmarine craft, tugs, and mine layers in the greatest possible numbers. * * *

SIMS.

And Rear Admiral Sims explained that the British had experienced great difficulties with the types of mines available, and that similar difficulties might be experienced with the American prewar type of mine (see pp. 191, 192, 193, printed testimony).

Parenthetically, the following extract from the testimony of Rear Admiral Sims is a pertinent comment on the tasks the Navy Department imposed upon him while denying him the assistance of more than one aid (see p. 193, printed testimony):

I was to find out all about mine developments among the Allies. It should be pointed out that at the time I received this message I was at Queenstown, in command of the Irish station. Nobody on my staff was in London, with the exception of one man who had resigned from the Navy in 1914 and had been assisting me voluntarily without pay since April, 1917. During this same week I received requests from the department for recommendations as to type of destroyers that should be built, as to the allied aircraft plans, and as to what the effort of the United States in naval aviation and cooperation with the Allies should be.

His testimony continues (see pp. 195, 196, 197):

The first intimation that I had from the department of the discovery or invention of any new type of mine, such as would make possible extensive operations when material and tonnage became available, was in a message received from the department on the 18th of August, over three months after the department had proposed their first scheme for a barrier across the North Sea. The message was as follows:

"From: Admiral Benson.
"To: Admiral Sims.

"Opnav 187. Bureau of Ordnance has developed mine which is hoped may have decisive influence upon operations against submarines. Utmost secrecy considered necessary. Request that officer representing Admiralty, clothed with power to decide, be sent here to inspect and thoroughly test mine. If found satisfactory, arrange for cooperation in mine operation. 20017."

I immediately replied in my dispatch 187 of August 22, stating that the British were sending a special officer to inspect and test the new mine, and that if it was

found "suitable for operations in contemplation further arrangements for cooperation would be made."

It was at this time—that is, just after the middle of August—that Admiral Mayo arrived in London. He brought with him a memorandum from the Bureau of Ordnance with regard to the new mine and had been instructed by the department to discuss at the allied conference the possibility of offensive operations based npon the employment of this new mine.

In the agenda for the conference prepared by Admiral Jellico item 2 was that of a mine or net barrage, either in German waters or further afield. In his report of the conference, addressed to the Secretary of the Navy on September 8, Admiral Mayo said regarding the discussion that took place:

"The British Admiralty put forward as an alternative to a close offensive in German waters the suggestion that the activity of enemy submarines might be restricted by the laying of an effective mine field or mine net barrage. If such an operation were undertaken, it would appear that it would take the form of:

"1. An efficient mine-field barrage, so as to completely shut in the North Sea, which was estimated to require about 100,000 mines, a number of which would not be available for some considerable time; or

"2. A barrage of mine nets for the same purpose, which proposal was, in view of experience to date, deemed impracticable. The conference after discussion agreed that the distinct mine barrage could not wel be undertaken unti an adequate supply of mines of satisfactory type was assured and that until or unless such conditions ensue the improvements and extension of the present system of mine fields was desirable and further, that a barrage of mine nets was impracticable."

This was Admiral Mayo's report.

The same information was cabled to the department by Admiral Mayo in cables of September 5 and September 6, 1917.

It is apparent from the results of this conference that once again the impracticability was clearly shown of any such scheme as that proposed by the department in its cable of May 11, which was based upon the assumption that a barrier of mine nets could be planted and maintained.

The description of the new mine brought over by Admiral Mayo gave an entirely new direction to the discussion and before Admiral Mayo left he was provided with a plan drawn up in a conference of allied officers for a barrage of mines of this new type to be put across the North Sea.

On September 13 Admiral Mayo received a message from Admiral Benson emphasizing the great possibilities of the new mine, stating the British officers sent over to the United States to examine it had found it most satisfactory and urging that immediate action be taken. The result was a proposal by the Admiralty of a definite scheme for the northern mine barrage.

On October 21, after Admiral Mayo had returned to Washington and conferred with the department, the department cabled me in their number 772 as follows:

"Sixth. Contract has been let for 100,000 mines of American type. The United States has offered to commandeer for British Admiralty three vessels suitable for mine laying, and in addition can probably commandeer two or three more vessels suitable for mine laying, to be manned by the United States for employment in cooperation with British mine-laying force, in joint plan which may be finally agreed upon.

"Seventh. Question of proposed mine barrage, Scotland to Norway, as presented to Navy Department is not definitely concurred in, but careful consideration is being given to this particular subject with a view to arrive at definite conclusions in regard to employment of the mine barrage, which measure is considered in principle to promise good results."

That is to say, the mine barrage of the North Sea, the plan of which was drawn up by the British Admiralty and which had been proposed by the British Admiralty and which was taken home by Admiral Mayo, was held up for discussion to see whether the American Navy Department would agree to the laying of that barrage.

After a further consideration of the plans, the department decided to accept the Admiralty's proposal for a joint mine barrage in the North Sea, and in a cable of November 2, 1917, I was informed of the acceptance of the project by the department in the following cable:

"Inform Admiralty that department concurs in project for mine barriers, Scotland to Norway, and has already taken steps to fit out eight mine planters, to sail February 1; also expediting completion of 12 mine-sweeping tugs. Expect to begin shipment of mines January 15. Will send officers to confer and arrange details within a few days."

By this time losses of merchant tonnage through submarine action had diminished to one-half the April, 1917, figure, and this, combined with the increasing number of antisubmarine craft, the rising curve of merchant tonnage production, and the ex-

tended employment of the convoy system, had made it apparent that the Allies would be able ultimately to defeat the submarine, and to carry on the war throughout 1918, provided no increase in tonnage losses was experienced.

This situation, and this situation alone, made it possible to divert a portion of our military and industrial efforts from those antisubmarine measures which were producing immediate results to others, such as the proposed mine barrage, from which it would take longer to realize benefit. Our primary mission continued, of course, to be the protection of troops and shipping in convoys; but any undertaking which we would carry out in addition, such as the northern mine barrage, gave promise of being of great value in helping to defeat the submarines and in depressing the morale of submarine commanders.

As I have clearly pointed out, however, the plan of the mine barrage, as finally carried out, as a supplementary measure against submarines, was an entirely different matter from the plans proposed by the department in April and May, 1917. These implied a complete neglect of the time element, and a desire to undertake enormous projects which could not possibly have been carried out at the time, and in time to be of any avail against the submarine campaign, unless, in the meantime, the measures which had been recommended to the department, after full conference with the Allies, had been accepted and put in full effect. Considering the resources of the Allies at that time, this was a condition impossible to fulfill.

Here, again, is an illustration of the way in which, to quote from my letter of January 7, 1920, paragraph 78:

"Instead of relying upon the judgment of those who had actual war experience in this peculiar warfare, the Navy Department, though lacking not only this experience, but also lacking adequate information concerning it, insisted upon a number of plans that could not be carried out."

An interesting commentary is found on page 166 of Admiral Lord Jellicoe's book, "The Crisis of the Naval War," where he says: "It was estimated at that time that the barrage would absorb the services of some 250 small vessels in order that a sufficient number might be kept constantly on patrol." This at the time when there were not three score British patrol vessels available for antisubmarine work in the Atlantic proper and when the Navy Department was doling out an occasional half dozen destroyers for that service, as shown in the previous review of the antisubmarine and convoy situations. (See ante, p. 66, et seq.)

In this connection it should be understood that the North Sea mine barrage as finally designed and laid consisted of three sections, only one of which would be dangerous to surface vessels, while patrols were to be maintained over the other two sections to force submarines to dive into the mines (see p. 174, Jellicoe, "The Crisis of the Naval War").

Of the accomplishments of the North Sea mine barrage Admiral Lord Jellicoe speaks as follows (see p. 95, "The Crisis of the Naval War"):

> The laying of the North Sea mine barrage was not accomplished without very considerable delay, and many difficulties were encountered. It was originally anticipated that the barrage would be completed in the spring of 1918, but owing to various defects in both British and United States mines which made themselves apparent when the operations commenced, due partly to the great depth of water as well as to other causes, a delay of several months took place, and even when near completion the barrage was not so effective as many had hoped in spite of the great expenditure of labor and material involved. I have not the figures of the number of submarines that the barrage is thought to have accounted for, but it was known to be disappointing.

Actually the barrage was not completed before the armistice on November 11, 1918. As a means of positively confining the submarines within the North Sea it was no more effective, therefore, than a fence part of the way around a pasture. On the other hand, a number of submarines blundered into it and were injured or destroyed, and it had an extremely desirable indirect effect in lowering the morale of the submarine crews.

In concluding his testimony as to the North Sea mine barrage Rear Admiral Sims said (see pp. 199 and 200, printed testimony):

From the time at which the project was undertaken it had my full support and approval as a subsidiary measure, designed to depress enemy morale and to accomplish the destruction of a certain number of enemy submarines.

It would, perhaps, be unnecessary for me to make this statement but for the assertion which has been made and widely circulated that the Navy Department had proposed and had from the first favored this project and that I was about the only officer of the Navy who had ever opposed it.

* * * * * * *

It should be fully understood, as I will explain in detail in a moment, that I never opposed the northern mine barrage as a valuable supplementary submarine measure, when once the material and tonnage were available to make such a barrage possible. There is a distinction with regard to the mine barrage which has been lost sight of. As an achievement it stands as one of the wonders of this war. No such project in naval warfare had ever before been carried out more successfully. It is entirely beyond my power to give adequate expression to the admiration which I have for the organization in the United States which produced the mines, mine-layers, and mining material and sent them abroad, and for the brave and efficient officers and sailors who were instrumental in the laying of this barrage; but, as a matter of policy, there is a very great difference between a mine barrage carried out as a useful supplementary measure and the proposal to make such a barrage our principal activity, when, in view of the fact that a year's preparation was necessary before so gigantic a project could be carried into effect. The war would have been lost before we could have assembled the material for such a barrage or could have found the tonnage to carry this material to Europe.

As I have repeatedly pointed out, the time element is one of the deciding factors in warfare. At a time of great danger, such as existed in 1917, at the time of our entry into the war, any plan, however successful its ultimate results might be, must be judged in the light of the situation existing at the time. It is not enough when a nation is at war to prepare magnificent schemes of operation to be effective at some future date. When the enemy was striking the Allies in 1917, and dealing blows that were rapidly cutting all lines of communication by destroying the tonnage upon which the allied cause depended, no plan which we could have adopted would have been of any use which did not provide the immediate necessary assistance to the Allies in meeting the immediate issue; that is, the submarine campaign as it was being waged in 1917.

And yet the Secretary of the Navy in his testimony alleged that Rear Admiral Sims had shown great lack of vision with respect to the North Sea mine barrage and had delayed its inauguration unwisely.

An interesting history of this great undertaking prepared by the Navy Department will be found in the testimony submitted by Capt. W. V. Pratt, reproduced on pages 1376 to 1449 of the printed testimony.

CLOSING GERMAN SUBMARINE PORTS.

It would serve no essentially useful purpose to extend this review of the actual conduct of the war to include all the minor items and operations brought to light in the Senate Naval Investigation. It may be well to mention, however, the reply of Secretary Daniels on April 17, 1917, to the first dispatch from Rear Admiral Sims in which the latter urged immediate concentration against the submarine operations in the critical war zone. This reply was as follows (see p. 186, printed testimony):

Is it not practicable to blockade German coast efficiently and completely, thus making practically impossible the egress and ingress of submarines? The steps attempted or accomplished in this direction are to be reported at once. Yours of noon 14th April will be given earnest and immediate attention.

DANIELS,
Secretary of the Navy.

A comprehensive cable reply was made by Rear Admiral Sims on the following day in which he pointed out the salient difficulties of the problem, the attempts made to solve it, and the apparent futility of endeavoring to make a close and absolute closure of all the German submarine bases. (See p. 186, printed testimony.)

The soundness of the strategic policy of doing this—if it were possible—was so glaringly obvious that the fact that it had not been done might have suggested, even to those technically ignorant, that there were remarkable difficulties. Yet even President Wilson took up the idea and pointed out that:

> We are hunting hornets all over the farm and letting the nest alone. None of us knows how to go to the nest and crush it, and yet I despair of hunting for hornets all over the sea when I know where the nest is, and I know that the nest is breeding hornets as fast as I can find them. (See p. 2021, printed testimony.)

If the hornet simile is to be adhered to, it should be realized that it was essentially a case of hornets against hornets and that in the vicinity of the nest the enemy concentration was so great as to destroy or drive off would-be crushers of the nest and to tear out barriers built overnight across its outlet.

The Navy Department stuck to this idea, however, until Admiral Mayo examined into its possibilities when in London in September, 1917. There he found that even its partial accomplishment would necessitate the destruction of at least 40 old battleships and 43 cruisers to be contributed by the Allies and the United States. So after the Navy Department had entertained this idea for seven months—instead of concentrating its thought and energies on the maritime measures that defeated the submarines—it cabled:

> No. 775. Department considers close offensive involving sinking of older battle ships and cruisers to block German channels impracticable.
> (See pp. 187 and 188, printed testimony.)

SUBMARINES TO HUNT SUBMARINES.

It should be recalled that Rear Admiral Sims said in his first letter to the Navy Department on April 19, 1917 (see p. 34, printed testimony):

> 34. *Submarine versus submarines.*—There has always been opposition to using submarines against submarines principally on the grounds that the possibilities of their accomplishments would not be sufficiently great to justify the risk involved of mistaken identity and resulting damage to friends.
>
> The director of antisubmarine warfare believes, however, that such operations promise well and the experiment is now being tried with as many submarines as can be spared from the Grand Fleet. Some enemy submarines have been destroyed by this method, usually torpedoed. One valuable feature of this method lies in the fact that as long as our submarines are not so used, the enemy submarine is always perfectly safe in assuming that all submarines sighted are friends. If this certainty is removed, the enemy will be forced to keep down more and to take much greater precautions against detection. This is an advantage of no small amount.
>
> In addition to the possible offensive work that may be accomplished by our submarines on such duty, the plan furnishes us with more reliable information as to the limitions and capabilities of enemy vessels under the actual conditions existing in the areas in which they operate. Without this knowledge based on actual experience too much is left to conjecture, which is liable to lead to a great deal of misdirected effort.
>
> WM. S. SIMS.

It should be realized that a submarine could sight a destroyer much farther than the latter could see the submarine; and conse-

quently the enemy submarine usually could disappear beneath the surface before a destroyer became aware of its presence. But submarines, though at great risks to their crews, were developed into most effective hunters of enemy submarines.

In these circumstances Rear Admiral Sims persistently urged that submarines be included in the antisubmarine forces sent into European waters. But it was not until Admiral Mayo, when in London in August, 1917, had indorsed his recommendation that the department cabled (see pp. 76, 77, and 78, printed testimony):

AUGUST 24, 1917.

For: Admiral Sims.
From: Chief of Naval Operations.

Opnav. 228. It is possible that about middle of October five submarines, K class, will arrive England, followed about two weeks later by five of the L class. Tenders accompany. What will be their prospective duties and where based? 17023.

Admiral BENSON.

If the Navy was "ready from stem to stern" there would seem to be some proper grounds for questions as to why it would take from August 24 to the middle of October before "it is possible" that the first five submarines could arrive overseas and that they would be followed only two weeks later by the next five. In point of fact the K boats did not arrive at the Azores until the end of October, and L boats did not arrive in Ireland until the end of January (see p. 78, printed testimony).

While Admiral Lord Jellicoe credits to British submarines over 10 per cent of the total number of enemy submarines sunk,[1] Rear Admiral Sims speaks of their efficacy in the following terms (see p. 78, printed testimony):

I might add here * * * that not only do the final records show that in proportion to the numbers engaged submarines were the most effective antisubmarine craft, but also, as was pointed out in many letters and dispatches which I have not read, they had a very marked strategic and moral effect on the submarine campaign.

In view of such superlative efficacy it can not but be a matter for general regret that the Navy Department allowed so many months of the most critical period of the submarine war to slip by before it acceded to the recommendations of Rear Admiral Sims that submarines to hunt submarines be sent to Europe.

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[1] Jellicoe, The Crisis of the Naval War, p. 227.

SECTION IV.

POLICY OF THE NAVY DEPARTMENT.

STATEMENT.

We have seen that Rear Admiral Sims, acting as the advance agent of the Navy Department at the allied naval headquarters in London, urged upon the Navy Department, the policy of immediate concentration with maximum forces available against the submarines in the critical war zone as soon as he became informed of actual conditions there. This is made manifest by his dispatches of April, 1917. (See pp. 29–34, printed testimony and ante p. 59, et seq.)

We have seen that the General Board of the Navy in Washington similarly urged and with even more insistence, the policy of immediate concentration of effort against the submarines in the critical war zone—and this in priority of other naval activities—as soon as it had become aware of the actual conditions of the naval war by its conferences in Washington with the naval authorities on the British and French missions that came to Washington at the end of April, 1917. This is shown in the strongest of terms by the General Board's letter of May 3, 1917, to the Secretary of the Navy. (See pp. 1106–1109, printed testimony, and ante, p. 44, et seq.)

It is established, therefore, that a policy of immediate concentration of naval effort and forces against the submarine campaign in the crucial campaign in the critical war zone was separately, professionally and officially urged by both the General Board and the advance agent whom the Navy Department had sent forward to obtain information and make recommendations to it. Yet we find, as has been shown above, that such a policy of immediate offensive concentration was not put in operation during the first few months of our participation in the war on a scale commensurate with our then extant naval equipment useful for antisubmarine warfare.

In his testimony the Secretary of the Navy asserted that "the Navy was ready from stem to stern." (See pp. 3064 and 3065, printed testimony, and ante, p. 34, et seq.) And the whole trend of his testimony in this respect was an effort to establish the adequate preparedness of the Navy and to explain its actions on grounds of policy. It remains, therefore, to examine the evidences of policy which seem to have led the Secretary to disregard the insistent and similar urgings of the General Board and of Rear Admiral Sims, who were among his professional advisers.

The professional adviser to the Secretary of the Navy who officially outranked all others—but apart from whom was the General Board—was the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral W. S. Benson. It appears from unrefuted testimony that this officer held very strong

personal prejudices against the British—indeed, he admitted them—and that these had led him to say and to reiterate to Rear Admiral Sims when the latter was leaving the United States for England at the end of March, 1917:

Don't let the British pull the wool over your eyes. It is none of our business pulling their chestnuts out of the fire. We would as soon fight the British as the Germans.

(See pp. 1, 267–272, 1879–1884, printed testimony.)

While the character of this statement has given to it the widest publicity, it is quoted here in order that it may be said that the evidence did not reveal that Admiral Benson had permitted his personal prejudices to warp his official activities once the United States was well into the war. Yet the fact that the principal officer of our Navy and the chief naval adviser of the Secretary said that "We would as soon fight the British as the Germans," and said it on the eve of our entry into the war alongside of the British and in part because of the inhuman horrors of the unrestricted campaign of the German submarines, is a fact that should not be omitted or dismissed from mind in considering our naval policy upon our entry into the war.

It does not appear from the testimony that any definite plan or policy for aggressive naval operations in the event of war was permitted by the Navy Department to become known to the commander in chief of our Atlantic Fleet, Admiral H. T. Mayo, prior to our entry into the war; for he has testified as follows (see p. 584, printed testimony):

March 28: Upon arrival (of the Fleet) at Hampton Roads * * * I proceeded to Washington to consult with the Chief of Naval Operations with regard to possible activities.

March 28 to 31: No written plan or policy was given to me at the time, but from conversations I understood the policy to be as follows:

The Atlantic Fleet is to be maintained in readiness for active operations. No vessels to be sent to navy yards unless in need of major repairs. Fleet to continue intensive training of gun crews for armed guard duty.[1]

Admiral Mayo's testimony continues (see pp. 584, 585, and 587, printed testimony):

April 4: Orders were received to organize the patrol force (for American waters) on April 8, and to assign all destroyers that could be spared to this force.

* * * * * * *

In this connection it should be noted that no policy with regard to the future of the battleships had been decided upon, except as previously noted. * * *

April 5: No orders for patrol force having been received, instructions were requested (by Admiral Mayo from the Navy Department) as to the mission to be assigned to the patrol force. The answer to this request was:

"The mission of the patrol force will be issued by the department through the commander in chief."

* * * * * * *

April 9: Information was received that Vice Admiral Browning, Royal (British) Navy, and Rear Admiral Grasset, French Navy, would arrive Hampton Roads morning April 10 for conference with Chief of Naval Operations, commander in chief, and commander patrol force.

A conference was held with these allied officers on April 10 at Hampton Roads and was followed by a conference with them the next day in Washington. In his prepared statement to the subcom-

[1] Sixty gun crews had been extracted from the Atlantic Fleet by the Navy Department for armed guard duty during March, 1917. See pp. 582 and 583, printed testimony.

mittee, Secretary Daniels gave the following description of these conferences (see p. 2791, printed testimony):

Three days after the declaration of war Admiral Mayo was informed that Vice Admiral Browning, commander in chief of the British forces in the western Atlantic, and Rear Admiral Grasset, commander of the French forces, were proceeding in their flagships to Hampton Roads for a conference with the chief of naval operations (Admiral Benson), the commander in chief of the Atlantic Fleet (Admiral Mayo), and the commander of the patrol forces (Capt. (now Admiral) H. B. Wilson).

He has told you of the conference held at the Hotel Chamberlain, Hampton Roads, on April 10, four days after war was declared, at which Vice Admiral Browning read a communication from the British Admiralty inquiring as to what assistance the United States was prepared to render.

The conference adjourned, as he has told you, to meet the following day in Washington "to take up the suggestions of the foreign governments with the Secretary of the Navy, as Vice Admiral Browning considered his instructions required a conference with the Secretary of the Navy." He has told you that there were present at that conference the Secretary of the Navy, Admirals Browning, Grasset, Benson, Mayo, Wilson, and the members of the General Board, and that "the subjects discussed were those of the previous day—that is, cooperation with the Allies and the assistance the United States could and would render." Though he did not go into detail, Admiral Mayo and every other person who was present can testify to the fact that the British and French representatives were impressed by the cordiality with which their suggestions and requests were received and complied with and the evident disposition of the representatives of the United States Navy to accord the Allies every possible assistance.

Admiral Mayo's testimony shows that it was decided to send destroyers to European waters to cooperate with the allied antisubmarine forces in that area, and he says:

"Oral instructions were received to prepare six destroyers for distant service, selecting those boats which were most reliable from the point of view of material."

That conference, at which complete cooperation with the French and British was arranged and we agreed to take over the patrol of our Atlantic coast, the Caribbean Sea, and Gulf of Mexico, agreed as soon as possible to bring most of the Pacific Fleet into the Atlantic, to patrol South American waters, held April 11 and 12; and destroyers were ordered sent to Europe before we ever heard a word from Admiral Sims, except the one line announcing his arrival. Sims sent his first dispatch from London, reviewing the situation April 14.

Attention is invited particularly to the Secretary's positive statement that "complete cooperation with the French and British was arranged" at the second conference. More especially is attention invited to the positive statement by Secretary Daniels that "Admiral Mayo and every other person who was present, can testify to the fact that the British and French representatives were impressed by the cordiality with which their suggestions and requests were received and complied with and the evident disposition of the representatives of the United States Navy to accord the Allies every possible assistance."

Admiral Mayo described these conferences to the subcommittee in the following terms (see p. 587, printed testimony):

April 10: Conference with foreign officers was held at Hotel Chamberlain; representatives of Governments as follows:

Admiral W. S. Benson, United States Navy, Admiral H. T. Mayo, United States Navy, Capt. H. B. Wilson, United States Navy, United States; Vice Admiral Browning, Royal Navy, Great Britain; Rear Admiral Grasset, French Navy, France.

At this conference Vice Admiral Browning explained the mission of his force, and read a communication from the British Admiralty interrogating the representatives of the United States as to the nature of the assistance the United States Navy was prepared to render, and stating the desire of the British Admiralty for assistance, especially in antisubmarine craft. Rear Admiral Grasset explained the mission of his division and requested that the United States assist in the patrol of the Caribbean.

Admiral Benson stated that the present policy of the United States Navy was to maintain the fleet intact and to assist in the patrol of the Atlantic and Gulf coasts of the United States and waters adjacent thereto.

The conference adjourned to meet the following day in Washington, D. C., to take up the suggestions of the foreign Governments with the Secretary of the Navy, as Vice Admiral Browning considered his instructions required a conference with the Secretary of the Navy.

April 11. Conference held in Navy Department.

Present: Mr. Daniels, Secretary of the Navy; Admiral W. S. Benson, United States Navy; Admiral H. T. Mayo, United States Navy; Vice Admiral M. Browning, Royal Navy; Rear Admiral Grasset, French Navy; Capt. H. B. Wilson, United States Navy; and members of the general board.

The subjects discussed were similar to those of the previous day. The following decisions were reached:

(*a*) Although the present policy of the United States required that the fleet be kept intact, a division of destroyers will be sent to European waters to cooperate with the allied antisubmarine forces in that area.

(*b*) United States to patrol off Atlantic coast of United States and assist in the patrol of Caribbean Sea and Gulf of Mexico.

Oral instructions were received to prepare six destroyers for distant service, selecting those boats which were most reliable from the point of view of material."

In comparing these two descriptions of the same conferences attention is invited first to Admiral Mayo's statement that "Vice Admiral Browning explained the mission of his force and read a communication from the British Admiralty interrogating the representatives of the United States as to the nature of the assistance the United States Navy was prepared to render and stating the desire of the British Admiralty for assistance, *especially in antisubmarine craft.*"

Attention is invited next to Admiral Mayo's statement of the announcement of American policy by Admiral Benson with which "the desire of the British Admiralty for assistance, especially in antisubmarine craft," was received.

Admiral Benson stated that the present policy of the United States Navy was to maintain the fleet intact and to assist in the patrol of the Atlantic and Gulf coasts of the United States and waters adjacent thereto.

In other words, the United States having entered into the war as a belligerent, the Navy Department proposed to keep the naval forces of the United States intact for the latter's own ends, except that it would so far venture them in the common cause as to *assist* the Allies in the patrolling of its own Atlantic and Gulf coasts and adjacent waters. And as the fleet, and especially the battle fleet, of the United States Navy was admittedly deficient in destroyers and other screening vessels and was to be kept intact (except for home-water patrols, in which all available destroyers were to be used), it would seem unavoidable to read into this statement of initial policy the implication that practically no destroyers would be available for offensive warfare against the submarines in the critical war zone overseas. Such was the cordial reception at first accorded the request of the Allies for naval assistance, "especially in antisubmarine craft," at the first conference at Hampton Roads.

But apparently a slight breach was made at the ensuing conference at Washington in the initial policy of nonaggressive conservation; for, as quoted above, Admiral Mayo reports further:

April 11: The subjects discussed were similar to those of the previous day. The following decisions were reached:

(*a*) Although the present policy of the United States required that the fleet be kept intact, a division of destroyers will be sent to European waters to cooperate with the allied antisubmarine forces in that area.

(*b*) United States to patrol off Atlantic coast of United States and assist in the patrol of Caribbean Sea and Gulf of Mexico.

Oral instructions were received to prepare six destroyers for distant service, selecting those boats which were most reliable from the point of view of material.

Yet apparently when, on April 11, 1917, the ardor of the Secretary of the Navy for "bold and audacious" action caused the Navy Department to wrench itself loose from its stay-at-home policy to the extent of sending nearly one-tenth of its destroyers overseas, it was even then necessary to select "those boats which were most reliable from the point of view of material"; and it was further necessary to "prepare" these choice boats which did not sail until 18 days after our entry into the war.

Nor should the following French comment on the upshot of these conferences be overlooked (see p. 121, printed testimony):

Provision of small patrol vessels for French coast not yet possible, owing to requirements for home defense. When available, however, they will be supplied, French escorting them over and manning, if necessary. Every possible effort will be made to supply them. Too much rēliance should not be placed, however, in early success.

That is, such small patrol vessels as the United States had were to be kept at home for coast patrol rather than be permitted to go to the seat of the naval war. And if they should be released ultimately for work off the French coast, if necessary, they were to be taken over and manned by the French; the Navy Department might supply the patrol vessels if the French would do the fighting.

Such was what Secretary Daniels characteristically described in his sworn testimony as "the cordiality with which their (the French and British) suggestions and requests were received and complied with and the evident disposition of the representatives of the United States Navy to accord the Allies every possible assistance."

From all of the foregoing the conclusion seems unavoidable that up to April 11, 1917, the fixed policy of the Navy Department under Secretary Daniels and President Wilson was that the naval forces of the country should be kept at home for coast patrol and defense and that the fleet should be strictly conserved for such eventualities as might come out of the European war. But though in retrospect such a policy may now seem startling, it loses some of this quality when it is recalled that only one month before the above reviewed conferences took place, President Wilson was anathematizing Congress because it had prevented him from putting the United States in that state of "armed neutrality," whereby he might have avoided belligerent participation on either side of the European war—at least until the submarine campaign had run its deadly course without American offensive intervention.

The division of six destroyers which had been ordered to prepare for foreign service on the 11th of April, 1917, sailed on the 24th of that month. No further orders were issued by the Navy Department for other destroyers even to prepare for foreign service until after this first overseas division had sailed. It would not seem improper to conclude, therefore, that as the Navy Department, between April 11 and April 25, did not order additional destroyers even to prepare to sail, between those dates the Navy Department did not contemplate sending destroyers in addition to the first six in the near future, even though there were over 60 destroyers then on the Navy list. (See pp. 588 and 1704–1708, printed testimony.)

Under these circumstances it is difficult not to look upon the first contingent of six more as a contingent to "show the flag" than as the

vanguard of great antisubmarine forces, commensurate in number both to the supply in the United States and the demand in Europe, which supposedly were being marshaled and rushed over to the aid of the Allies as expeditiously as possible. The further conclusion seems unavoidable, therefore, that the Navy Department on April 11, having broken away from its announced policy of nonaggressive stay-at-home conservation of the fleet to the extent of detaching as many as six destroyers in response to vice Admiral Browning's appeal "for assistance especially in antisubmarine craft," it then proceeded to sit tight on its announced policy of passive conservation without even preparing further destroyer forces to be ready for overseas duty.

Toward the end of April, however, the pleas of Rear Admiral Sims from London and those of Vice Admiral Browning for antisubmarine forces were reenforced by the arrival in Washington of Rear Admiral Sir Dudley de Chair, Royal Navy, the naval representative on the Balfour Mission. The instructions under which Rear Admiral de Chair came to Washington are authoritatively disclosed by Admiral Lord Jellicoe, then first sea lord at the Admiralty, in the following quotation from his book, The Crisis of the Naval War, pages 156 to 158:

He (Rear Admiral de Chair) was informed that the position could not be considered satisfactory until the number of trawlers and sloops available for patrol and escort duty was greatly increased and that a total of at least *another hundred destroyers was required.* (The italics are Lord Jellicoe's.)

It was pointed out that difficulty might arise from the natural desire of the United States Government to retain large numbers of small craft for the protection of shipping in the vicinity of the United States, but it was at the same time indicated that our experience showed that the number of submarines that the Germans could maintain on the western side of the Atlantic was very small, and that the real danger (of great tonnage losses) therefore existed in European waters.

Admiral de Chair was asked amongst other matters to emphasize the assistance which United States submarines could render on the eastern side of the Atlantic, where they would be able to undertake antisubmarine operations. * * * (The first five American submarines arrived at the Azores toward the end of October, 1917, and the next five arrived in Ireland at the end of January, 1918. See ante, p. 200.)

* * * * * * *

Whilst the mission was in the United States constant communications passed on these subjects, the heavy losses taking place in merchant ships were stated, and every effort was made to impress upon the Navy Department the urgency of the situation.

The tenor of our communications will be gathered from these quotations from a personal telegram sent by me to Admiral de Chair on April 26, viz:

"For Rear Admiral de Chair from first sea lord 'You must emphasize most strongly to the United States authorities the very serious nature of the shipping position. We lost 55 British ships last week, approximately 180,000 tons, and rate of loss is not diminishing.'

* * * e * * *

"'Press most strongly that the number of destroyers sent to Ireland should be increased to 24 at once, if this is possible.

"'Battleships are not required, but concentration on the vital question of defeat of submarine menace is essential.

"'Urge on the authorities that everything should give way to the submarine menace and that by far the most important place on which to concentrate patrols is the southwest of Ireland.

* * * * * * *

"'You must keep constantly before the United States authorities the great gravity of the situation and the need that exists for immediate action.

"Our new methods will not be effective until July, and the critical period is April to July."

And immediately after quoting the above telegram, Admiral Lord Jellicoe laconically says: "It was very necessary to bring home to the United States Navy Department the need for early action."

Apparently such pressure pried loose more destroyers from the conservationist hold of the Navy Department; for on April 26 a second division of six destroyers was ordered to "proceed to home yards to fit out for distant service;" on April 28 a third division of six destroyers received similar orders; and, on May 1, 24 more destroyers and the tender *Dixie* were added to the list of those under orders to prepare for distant service. On May 4 the first six destroyers ordered overseas arrived at Queenstown. So one month after the United States had entered the war six antisubmarine vessels were in the submarine zone; no others had been ordered even to prepare until the 26th of April; but before the 6th of May a total of 36, in addition to those already overseas, had been ordered to prepare.

It may as well be said here that of the 36 destroyers in preparation about the 1st of May, only 22 had arrived in European waters by the 1st of July, indicating that either their matériel condition was such as to require very lengthy repairs or that it was not the will of the Navy Department to expedite their departure from American waters. Be that as it may, the fact remains that on May 1, 1917, there were six American destroyers overseas and 36 ordered under preparation for overseas duty, or a total of 42; and yet it was after October 1, 1917, before they all reached the war zone, for on that last-mentioned date there were only 41 American destroyers in European waters. (See p. 251, printed testimony.)

It should be recalled that it was after conference with Rear Admiral de Chair that the General Board wrote its strong letter of May 3, 1917, to the Secretary of the Navy, in which the board insisted that the antisubmarine work should be given priority over everything else as the emergency in this respect was crucial and immediate. It would appear, therefore, that by the beginning of May Rear Admiral Sims, the General Board in the Navy Department, and the Admiralty, as directed by Admiral Lord Jellicoe and represented by Vice Admiral Browning and Rear Admiral de Chair, were all, in effect, of one mind in their estimates of the situation and in their requests and recommendations to the Navy Department. Their policy was positive, specific, and aggressive, while that of the Navy Department was negative, conservative, and nonaggressive—though beginning to yield to the extent of beginning to prepare to act along limited lines.

The fact that by early May there was virtual unanimity of professional naval opinion to the effect that naval effort should be concentrated on antisubmarine warfare in the critical zone would seem to show conclusively that the Navy Department made a grievous error in judgment in its estimate of the situation and consequent policy as announced by Admiral Benson on April 10, 1917. (See ante, p. 92.) The proof of this rests in that prior to April 26 orders had been given for the preparation and dispatch overseas of only six American destroyers; and that between that last date and May 1, 1917, orders were given for the preparation of 36 additional destroyers for overseas duty.

But this loss of one month because of faulty policy sinks into insignificance when compared to the fact that five more months elapsed before the arrival in Europe of all of these destroyers ordered

made ready on or before May 1. As the burden of testimony was to the effect that the first thing the United States should have done was to send such a flotilla of destroyers overseas, the Navy Department must admit that its failure to put such a flotilla in European waters in less than six months was either because of inadequate personnel or improper condition of the destroyers as to matériel—in other words, that it was not prepared—or else that it was prepared and that the vessels were ready, but that the delay in their arrival in European waters was because the Navy Department did not want to send them there sooner. If the destroyers were not ready, then the statement of Secretary Daniels that the Navy was ready falls to the ground as a false statement. And if the destroyers were ready but were not promptly sent overseas, as was insistently being urged by virtually all professional naval authorities, then Secretary Daniels stands in the position of having withheld available and most essential reenforcements contrary to the urgent advice of his professional advisors—and of having withheld these vital reenforcements because of ulterior motives of policy.

The evidence would seem to show that upon our entry into the war the position of Admiral Mayo, as commander in chief of the Atlantic Fleet, entitled him to ranking command over all United States naval forces operating in the Atlantic and, as such, to be at least consulted and advised as to policies and details. But the evidence shows that when the several details of destroyers above cited were made by the Navy Department, the orders were not accompanied by any statement of change of policy and gave no information or plan on which the orders were based. The evidence shows that on May 5, 1917, Admiral Mayo brought this matter to the attention of the Navy Department "in order that the policy might be definitely stated." It does not appear that the Navy Department responded. (See pp. 588 and 589, printed testimony.)

It would also seem from the testimony that commands in theory subordinate were created and forces assigned to them directly by the Navy Department, and that such commands were directed to report directly to the Navy Department. In order that the status of all concerned might be definitely understood the commander in chief brought this matter to the attention of the Navy Department in a letter of some length dated June 13, 1917. No reply was made by the Navy Department until July 9, 1917, when the question raised was answered by inclosing copies of orders issued on the 2d and 3d of July, respectively, to the Commander United States Naval Forces Operating in European Waters and to the Commander Convoy Operations in the Atlantic. These orders, while attaching the forces to the Atlantic Fleet, directed the force commanders to continue reporting direct to the Navy Department and yet instructed them to report to the commander in chief of the Atlantic Fleet as he might require. (See pp. 590–592.)

It would seem difficult to avoid the implication from the non-statement of policy and the apparent tangle in the chain of command between early April and early July, 1917, that during this period the policy announced on April 10 by Admiral Benson was adhered to in theory, but that tentative departures from it were being made in practice and on lines for which no decision had been reached well in

advance of each situation as it arose. In short, the policy of conservation of the fleet was not abandoned, but extemporaneous and detailed modifications were made as one emergency after another arose. In the absence of a policy calling for aggressive warfare overseas, and in the absence of plans to carry out such warfare, it was unavoidable that the Navy Department switch forces about under newly created commands with resultant confusion and without ability to outline any policy other than that of early April.

But on the 23d of June the Navy Department transmitted to Admiral Mayo a copy of the following letter from the Secretary of the Navy to the Secretary of State enunciating the policy of the Navy Department. (See p. 592, printed testimony.)

Confidential.

NAVY DEPARTMENT,
Washington, June 23, 1917.

SIR: Referring to the cablegram from Ambassador Page in London, dated June 23, 1917 (copy attached). After careful consideration of the present naval situation, taken in connection with the possible future situations which might arise, the Navy Department is prepared to announce as its policy in so far as it relates to the Allies:

1. The heartiest cooperation with the Allies to meet the present submarine situation, in European or other waters, compatible with an adequate defense of our own home waters.

2. The heartiest cooperation with the Allies to meet any future situation arising during the present war.

3. A realization that while a successful termination of the present war must always be the first allied aim and will probably result in diminished tension throughout the world, the future position of the United States must in no way be jeopardized by any disintegration of our main fighting fleets.

4. The conception that the present main military rôle of the United States naval forces lies in its safeguarding the lines of communication of the Allies. In pursuing this aim, there will, generally speaking, be two classes of vessels engaged—minor craft and major craft—and two rôles of action: First, offensive; second, defensive.

5. In pursuing the rôle set forth in paragraph 4, the Navy Department can not too strongly insist that in its opinion the offensive must always be the dominant note in any general plans of strategy prepared. But as the primary rôle in all offensive operations must perforce belong to allied powers, the Navy Department announces as its policy that, in general, it is willing to accept any joint plan of action of the Allies deemed necessary to meet immediate needs.

6. Pursuant to the above general policy, the Navy Department announces as its general plan of action the following:

(*a*) Its willingness to send its minor fighting forces, comprised of destroyers, cruisers, submarine chasers, auxiliaries, in any numbers not incompatible with home needs, and to any field of action deemed expedient by the joint allied admiralties, which would not involve a violation of our present State policy.

(*b*) Its unwillingness, as a matter of policy, to separate any division from the main fleet for service abroad, although it is willing to send the entire battleship fleet abroad to act as a united but cooperating unit when, after joint consultations of all admiralties concerned, the emergency is deemed to warrant it and the entire tension imposed upon the lines of communication due to the increase in the number of fighting ships in European waters will stand the strain upon it.

(*c*) Its willingness to discuss more fully plans for joint operations.

Sincerely, yours,

JOSEPHUS DANIELS.

TO the honorable the SECRETARY OF STATE.

Before analyzing some of the more specific naval policies set out in this important document, it would seem pertinent to point out a curious inversion of procedure of which it gives evidence.

It is a usual acceptance that the Navy is an arm of the Government provided to support the policies, and particularly the foreign policies of the Nation. And it is likewise a usual acceptance that the Department of State is that branch of the Government especially

charged, under the President, with the formulation and normal conduct of foreign policies and relations. Consequently it is to be expected that the President, with the Senate advising, will formulate the policy through the Department of State and that then the Navy Department will be called upon to carry it out in so far as its execution may require naval support.

But in the document under consideration we find the Secretary of the Navy announcing to the Secretary of State the policy of the Navy Department "in so far as it relates to the Allies." We find that this policy, as indicated by Secretary Daniels to Secretary Lansing, is not confined to naval decisions for the naval support of the Allies such as might be expected as between cobelligerents in a common cause and such as it would be natural to consider as supporting the normal policy of the Nation in such circumstances. On the contrary, and quite beyond such operative functions by the Navy Department, we find its Secretary advising the Secretary of State that the policy of the Navy Department "in so far as it relates to the Allies" is predicated basically on the decision to conserve the principal forces of the Navy from such participation in the war as might cause their subdivision or disintegration. And we find this policy of conservation announced by the Secretary of the Navy to the Secretary of State as being arrived at because of certain views apparently held by the Secretary of the Navy as to the security of the United States upon and after the close of the war; specifically—

> A realization that, while a successful termination of the present war must always be the first *allied* aim and will probably result in diminished tension throughout the world, the future position of the United States must in no way be jeopardized by any disintegration of our main fighting fleets.

The aspect to which it is desired first to invite attention is that, by making such a statement to Secretary Lansing, Secretary Daniels seems to have taken the initiative toward the Department of State in apprehending future foreign relations and in governing the policy of the Navy Department in accordance with his own prognosis rather than in accordance with such views as the Department of State might hold. But as the procedure he seems to have actually followed is an inversion of the normal functions and relations of the two departments and an assumption of prerogative by the Secretary of the Navy, it would seem that explanation of the fact that it occurred should be sought in that both Secretaries were subordinate to the President and that, in fact, Secretary Daniels was merely transmitting to Secretary Lansing the policy of President Wilson.

The above document—and especially the extract just quoted from it—seems to differentiate sharply the objective of the Allies in the war from that of the United States by saying that "while a successful termination of the war must always be the first *allied* aim," yet "the future position of the United States must in no way be jeopardized by any disintegration of our main fighting fleets." And it was implied that rather than expose our main fleets to disintegration, detachments of them would be withheld from the arena of the war although the whole fleet might go over as a unit. Seemingly the Navy Department was loath to trust fractions of our main fleets in European waters and would consider putting there only such a large fleet that it could account for itself.

In order to realize but one of the potentialities of such a policy it is only necessary to recall that if Germany had carried out battle cruiser raids which might well have disrupted the whole delicate system of Atlantic transport, the consequence might well have been a German victory as a result of the then to be expected collapse of the western front because of the cutting off of military support there, and of the civil populations of France and England because of the cutting off of the minimum food supplies essential to their survival. The result would have been that the United States would then alone have been face to face with a victorious Germany and such powers as the latter might have or might draw into association with herself in a final effort to extract from the United States the costs of the war and such betterments of opportunity on the Atlantic and Pacific and on the American continents as the defeat of the United States would there open up to the enemies of the latter.

On the other hand, assuming that the policy announced was in the expectation of the defeat of Germany and of the victory of the Allies, the insistence on the conservation of the American fleet for post bellum contingencies opens up specific questions.

The then hypothetical conditions—the defeat of Germany—have become the actual conditions of to-day. In these actual present day conditions there are no powers or combinations of powers that could offer a naval menace to the United States except Britain or Japan. The conclusion would seem unavoidable, therefore, that the policy of conserving the main fighting fleets of the United States for contingent eventualities ensuing upon an allied victory was predicated upon the possibilities of post bellum complications with either Britain or Japan or both.

Such hypotheses, looking to such near contingencies, would seem rather too obscure to warrant taking the chance of a possible defeat of the Allies as a result, perhaps, of the retention of the naval forces of the United States outside the war arena, wherein they might suffer attrition or disintegration. But the motives or point of view that caused this policy of conservation to be put forward first in April and then in June, 1917, may be visible to some degree if we cast back.

It should be recalled not only that in February, 1917, President Wilson apparently was striving to avoid belligerent participation in the war by his attempt to give the United States the merely self-defensive status of "armed neutrality." In response to the peace overtures made by Germany, on December 18, 1916, President Wilson had addressed identic peace notes to both groups of belligerents, in which notes he took occasion to express officially his inability to distinguish material differences between the objectives of the Allies and those of the Central Powers.

After receipt of replies from both groups of belligerents President Wilson delivered an address before the Senate on January 22, 1917, in which he said, in part:

> The Central Powers united in a reply which stated merely that they were ready to meet their antagonists in conference to discuss terms of peace.
>
> The Entente Powers have replied much more definitely and have stated, in general terms, indeed, but with sufficient definiteness to imply details, the arrangements, guaranties, and acts of reparation which they deem to be indispensable conditions of a satisfactory settlement.
>
> * * * * * * *

Only a tranquil Europe can be a stable Europe. There must be not only a balance of power but a community of power; not organized rivalries but an organized common peace.

Fortunately, we have received very explicit assurances on this point. The statesmen of both of the groups of nations now arrayed against one another have said, in terms that could not be misinterpreted, that it was no part of the purpose they had in mind to crush their antagonists. But the implications of these assurances may not be equally clear to all—may not be the same on both sides of the water. I think it will be serviceable if I attempt to set forth what we understand them to be.

They imply, first of all, that it must be a peace without victory. It is not pleasant to say this. I beg that I may be permitted to put my own interpretation upon it and that it may be understood that no other interpretation was in my thought.

I am seeking only to face realities and to face them without soft concealments. Victory would mean peace forced upon the loser, a victor's terms imposed upon the vanquished. It would be accepted in humiliation, under duress, at an intolerable sacrifice, and would leave a sting, a resentment, a bitter memory, upon which terms of peace would rest, not permanently, but only as upon quicksand.

Only a peace between equals can last; only a peace the very principle of which is equality and a common participation in a common benefit.

It is manifest from the above quotation of President Wilson's remarks on January 22, 1917, that only 10 days before the declaration of unrestricted submarine warfare by Germany, which caused the United States to sever diplomatic relations with Germany, President Wilson was pleading for a "peace without victory," and was saying that a victory by either group of belligerents would result in peace terms "accepted in humiliation, under duress, at an *intolerable sacrifice* * * *."

It well may be more than a coincidence that it was but 10 days after President Wilson had made such doctrinaire statements that the realists of Germany declared the unrestricted submarine warfare which came so very near to bringing about the defeat of the cause of the Entente Allies and of the United States.

Attention is invited more particularly to the fact that only 10 days before the United States was forced to sever diplomatic relations with Germany, only two and a half months before the United States was forced to war with Germany, the American President was telling the world in his official capacity that only a "peace without victory" was to be considered, and that the defeat of either group of belligerents would result in an "intolerable sacrifice" being imposed on the vanquished. In the President's own words that was his officially stated position toward a victory over Germany only two and a half months before we joined in the struggle that had been going on for nearly three years to stem and stop Germany's brutally conducted war of aggression.

What residue, if any, of the doctrine of "peace without victory" there may have been in the policy of naval conservation announced first in April and then in June, 1917, by or through Secretary Daniels to Secretary Lansing, it would seem impossible to determine from the data in hand.

The notable step from the policy of entirely nonaggressive conservation of the forces of the Navy, as given the French and British by Admiral Benson on April 10, toward aggressive belligerent participation in the war, as set out by the policy stated on June 23 by Secretary Daniels to Secretary Lansing, was that the Navy Department at last announced "Its willingness to send its minor fighting forces, comprised of destroyers, cruisers, submarine chasers, auxiliaries, in any numbers * * * and to any field of action deemed

expedient by the joint allied admiralties * * *." This was both a change of policy for the better toward aggressive participation in the war and an admission by the Navy Department that its former policy of complete conservation from overseas aggression had been an error if judged primarily under the critical maritime conditions reported as existing in the war zone by Rear Admiral Sims and others conversant with the state of facts there.

But even this step toward a more aggressive belligerency was carefully circumscribed; for the Navy Department proposed only "to send its minor fighting forces * * * in any numbers *not incompatible with home needs* * * *." That is, requirements for home coast patrols 3,000 miles from the center of the war zone were to be taken care of first, and then such surplusage of minor fighting forces as might be left after home needs had been taken care of would be available for aggressive overseas warfare. It was as though a man were to say, "I will devote my lesser powers to helping to win the war, but only to such extent as they may not be needed at home." And this belated tender of minor forces was further circumscribed by the provision that these forces would be sent "to any field of action deemed expedient by the joint allied admiralties *which would not involve a violation of our present State policy*"; that is to say, in effect, there was to be no wholehearted joining of policies and efforts against the Central Powers, but rather the United States was to maintain its separate State policy and was to limit the use of its minor naval forces accordingly, even though defeat or victory hung upon the most efficient and expeditious use of antisubmarine forces.

The policy announced on June 23 as to the main fighting fleet would seem, in effect, to be one of total abstention from the participation of this force in the war zone should it, or any part of it, be needed for aggressive warfare there. In this respect the Navy Department announced "its unwillingness, as a matter of policy, to separate any division from the main fleet for service abroad, * * *." Then it went on to say that it might send its whole and undivided main fleet abroad "when, after joint consultations of all admiralties concerned, the emergency is deemed to warrant it and the entire tension imposed upon the lines of communication due to the increase in the number of fighting ships in European waters will stand the strain upon it." This provision that only the whole and undivided fleet would go over made it certain that the Navy Department would not be called on to send it over, because many of the principal capital ships of the United States were oil burners, and throughout the remainder of the war there was great dearth of fuel oil even for the allied fleets and, during the maritime crisis of the summer of 1917, the stock of oil was so depleted that there remained on hand but eight weeks supply for the Grand Fleet.[1]

While in theory the nondivision of a main fleet is generally supported by naval strategists—with notable exceptions—the practical error of this policy of the Navy Department on this occasion was soon to be shown, for it became desirable to add a division of American battleships to the British Grand Fleet during the summer of 1917, and such a division was detached and sent over early in the following winter. The effect of this policy, therefore, was to delay the sending

[1] Jellicoe, "The Crisis of the Naval War," p. 147.

of this detachment for months after it would have been a desirable element of the Grand Fleet.

Upon the entry of the United States into the war there were two diametrically opposed ways of viewing the procedure under which its naval forces might participate in the war. One was that as the fleets of the allied nations constituted essentially one naval establishment, directed in general by a joint council, the American naval forces should come under this unity of command which need not cause their disintegration as massed commands, but which alone could direct efficiently and expeditiously the cooperation of the American naval contingents as integral parts, under unity of command, of the entire naval weapon being wielded against the common enemy. The other point of view would look upon the naval forces of the allied nations as one group and upon those of the United States as an entirely separate force to be directed primarily for the particular or ulterior ends of the Government of the United States, and in no sense to be brought under unity of command even approximating such as Marshal Foch exercised over the American Expeditionary Forces on land. It is evident that at the outset the Navy Department did not contemplate entering into any unity of naval command; for initially it announced that its policy was "to maintain the fleet intact and to assist in the patrol of the Atlantic and Gulf coasts of the United States and waters adjacent thereto," [1] without any apparent thought of aggressive participation of any of its forces in the naval war overseas.

The position the Navy Department took initially with regard to the main fighting fleets of the United States would seem to be but the unavoidable expression of its failure to recognize at the outset that in coordinated and unified operations and command lay the best chance of victory at sea as on land. It failed to see that the several fleets opposed to the Central Powers had best be in effect one great confederated naval establishment to which the forces of the United States were a sorely needed increment to be directed as they might best serve in the common cause to the defeat of Germany by the allied and associated nations. True fleet unity therefore would have called for a policy exactly opposite to that which the Navy Department took regarding its main fighting forces not only at the outset in April, 1917, but at the end of the following June; a policy which it soon was forced to abandon as incompatible to the necessities of the naval war as they actually existed.

We thus find the Navy Department resisting unity of naval command similar to that which was brought about on land, but being forced to retreat from its position step by step, though with accompanying delays.

At this point we would recall the initial policy of entire conservation of forces stated by Admiral Benson on April 10; then the failure to order even the preparation of more than six destroyers for overseas service prior to April 26; then the material delay in getting the destroyers ready; and the tangle in the fleet organization and chain of command during May and June showing lack of correct policy and plan at the outset and confusion in shifting even to a very moderate improvement in policy as stated on June 23, 1917. It

[1] Printed testimony, p. 587.

should be realized that it was to a Navy Department whose initial policy was entirely nonaggressive that Rear Admiral Sims sent his appeals of April 14 and 19 from London for the immediate dispatch overseas of all possible antisubmarine forces. It was to a Navy Department which was in seeming near chaos through having to expand at the same time that it was being forced to abandon its initial policy, at least in part, and to reorganize its forces to meet the new objectives the facts of the war were forcing on it, and for the meeting of which new objectives it was unprepared as to plans, matériel, and personnel that Rear Admiral Sims was appealing for a statement of policy throughout the spring of 1917.

There is no adequate evidence to show that in this period there was any policy other than as above suggested until Secretary Daniels wrote his letter of June 23, 1917, to Secretary Lansing, copy of which was delivered that same day to Admiral Mayo. But it is most difficult to understand why a copy of this pivotal statement of policy was not transmitted promptly to Rear Admiral Sims in London. The unrefuted evidence is, however, that it was not until July 10 that it was cabled to him and that its receipt on that day constituted the first definite statement of policy he had received from the Navy Department since leaving Washington in March, 1917. (See p. 56, printed testimony.)

It should be realized that Rear Admiral Sims was sent to London at the end of March, 1917 only with instructions to acquaint himself with the naval situation and to use the cable freely in communicating his deductions to the Navy Department; but that he was then given no outline of policy. It should be realized also that on the very day he arrived in London, April 10, Admiral Benson at Hampton Roads was announcing to Vice Admiral Browning that the policy of the Navy Department was to conserve the fleets of the United States intact and to use them only in assisting the Allies to patrol the Atlantic and Gulf coasts of the United States and adjacent waters.

That there was no practical response to Rear Admiral Sims's early calls for the dispatch of antisubmarine craft overseas, that he was left with a ridiculously inadequate staff even after he had been given the title and duties of Commander United States Naval Forces Operating in European Waters, that even then he was often left uninformed not only of operation details but was not given any outline of policy, might suggest to some minds that say until July, 1917, the Navy Department had not viewed the mission of Admiral Sims as really much more than a look-out post, the very presence of which served to mask the conservationist and nonaggressive intentions of the Navy Department during the earlier months of our participation in the war. But there is no direct evidence to this latter effect.

On the contrary, the evidence indicates that about the 1st of July there was developed in the Navy Department increasing attention to the problem of preparing and dispatching antisubmarine forces overseas. In the middle of August Admiral Mayo was sent to Europe "for the purpose of observing conditions and operations in European waters and of inspecting the activities of that portion of the Atlantic Fleet, remaining there until October 4."[1] (See p. 594, printed testimony.)

[1] "That portion of the Atlantic Fleet" consisted of 1 cruiser, 39 destroyers, 8 yachts, and 3 other vessels, a total of but 56 on September 1, 1917. (See p. 251, printed testimony.)

In this connection Secretary Daniels testified. (See p. 594, printed testimony.)

As to the North Sea barrage, the department felt it necessary, so much importance did it attach to the enterprise, to send Admiral Mayo over to convince our British naval associates of its possibility, after Admiral Sims had accepted the view of the British Admiralty that it was impracticable and had tried to induce the Bureau of Ordnance and the department not to press it.

In his report to the Secretary of the Navy upon returning from Europe, dated October 11, 1917, Admiral Mayo describes the purposes of his visit to Europe in the following terms. (See p. 633, printed testimony.)

2. *General instructions from Navy Department.*—(*a*) The instructions received from the Navy Department as to the purpose and object of the visit to England and France were not in definite and concrete form, but were readily to be inferred from the substance of conversations with the President, the Secretary of the Navy, and the Chief of Naval Operations, supplemented by memoranda from the Chief of Naval Operations and his assistants. A summary based on the above-mentioned conversations and memoranda was made (while en route to England) in order to enable definite inquiries to be made to the Governments concerned.

(*b*) The summary was of the following general character. It will be noted that the principal matters of inquiry were understood to be for the purpose of getting more closely in touch with—

(1) What has been done—historical—in order that knowledge of original plans and modifications thereof together with their elements of success or failures might enable the present situation to be understood and proposals for future operations to be appreciated.

(2) What is being done—present situation—following history of naval plans and operations up to present time, showing underlying causes of plans and operations now in force, the part that the United States plays in present plans and operations, the present naval strength and resources of the Allies and of the enemy, the situation in the several areas of operation, e. g., the North Sea, the Helgoland Bight, the Skagerak, the Baltic Sea, the English Channel, the Dunkirk-Zeebrugge district, the Mediterranean Sea, the Ardiatic Sea, etc.

(3) What is to be done—future operations—following the history of plans and operations in their evolution and development to the present time? What new plans and operations are proposed and for what reason? What part are the several Allies and the United States expected to take? What are allied and enemy building programs?

(4) Particular inquiry into the antisubmarine measures under way and proposed, as being the field of endeavor requiring immediate attention; assistance desired from the United States.

(5) The aircraft situation, particularly with regard to construction under way and proposed, and wherein the United States can assist to the best advantage for all concerned.

(6) The shipping situation, in so far as it bears on the "communications" of the Allies.

(7) The transfer of United States troops to France, in so far as the available number will have effect on the outcome of the war, and particularly with regard to the shipping necessary not only for transport of troops but chiefly for the upkeep and supply of the troops after their arrival in France.

(8) Certain inquiries in the matters of seeking for trade, the employment of oilers belonging to private companies, and the rumored transfer of men of war after the war.

(9) An international naval conference which the United States had requested the British Government to arrange for.

(10) Later additions to the purposes of the visit appeared in dispatches from the Navy Department in regard to Norway entering the war on the side of the Allies and certain inquiries regarding the possible capture of Russian capital ships by the enemy.

(11) General impressions regarding political, economic, and morale conditions in the allied countries, in so far as such conditions have bearing on the general military-naval situation.

It will be noted that in this statement to the Secretary of the Navy on October 11, 1917, of his then understanding of the pur-

poses of his visit to Europe, Admiral Mayo does not mention the North Sea barrage. Yet Secretary Daniels testified as follows: (See p. 1984, printed testimony).

As to the North Sea barrage, the department felt it necessary, so much importance did it attach to the enterprise, to send Admiral Mayo over to convince our British naval associates of its feasibility after Admiral Sims had accepted the view of the Britisk Admiralty that it was impracticable, and had tried to induce the Bureau of Ordnance and the department not to press it.

It seems difficult not to read this evidence by Secretary Daniels as intended to indicate that Admiral Mayo was sent to Europe primarily to convince the British of the feasibility of the North Sea barrage. And yet Admiral Mayo does not even mention the North Sea barrage among the items he had been directed to take up in Europe. It would seem that either Admiral Mayo omitted a very important matter from his above quoted report to the Secretary, or else that the Secretary's evidence just quoted is in error in stating that "the department felt it necessary, * * *, to send Admiral Mayo over to convince our British naval associates of its feasibility."

It is also interesting to note in connection with the above-quoted statement of Secretary Daniels that Admiral Mayo's report of October 11, 1917, contains the following paragraphs (see pp. 635 and 642, printed testimony):

(*d*) The statement of proposed future Admiralty policy dated September 17, 1917 (reference (*e*) and inclosure C), indicates growing appreciation of the necessity for more energetic offensive measures against the submarine in the way of preventing his egress from the North Sea.

(*b*) It is recommended that immediate and careful consideration be given to the reference mentioned above in connection with the proposed "mine barrage across the North Sea." (Reference (*d*) (*e*) and inclosures D, F.) This is the most promising plan for coping with the submarine menace that has yet been developed. The time required to prepare the necessary material is so great and the arrangements for instituting and maintaining the barrage require such careful working out that the earliest possible decision should be arrived at and the intentions of the United States made known to the British Government, in order that preparations may be begun and carried forward with all dispatch as soon as an agreement shall have been reached.

In reviewing his report Admiral Mayo said in his testimony (see p. 600, printed testimony):

Upon my return to the United States I strongly advised the Chief of Naval Operations to—

(*a*) Proceed with the North Sea mine-barrage project.

(*b*) To send a division of battleships to operate with the Grand Fleet.

(*c*) "That the United States make the earliest possible decision as to what forms and extent the assistance to be given shall take, and then proceed to exert every effort to expedite the production, dispatch, and employment of such assistance. Too much stress can not be laid on the importance of the time element."

It would seem from clause (*a*) of the above quotation that opinion in England had settled on the North Sea mine barrage project, but that it was the American Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Benson, who had to be "strongly advised" to "proceed" with it.

In concluding this section of his testimony, Admiral Mayo said (see p. 600, printed testimony):

In a consideration of the effect of our failure to be prepared, and of our progress in preparation after the policy was definitely settled upon, it must never be forgotten that these preparations were made under conditions which may never happen again, and that to rely on such conditions existing again would be folly. These conditions were—the enemy fleet contained by an allied navy and the enemy army fully engaged with allied armies. These conditions permitted the United States Navy to prepare

uninterruptedly, for even no enemy submarines appeared in United States waters for nearly 14 months after the declaration of war.

Admiral Mayo's recommendations evidently stimulated Secretary Daniels and Admiral Benson to increased attention to naval conditions in the critical zone of actual naval warfare as distinguished from the attention they had given initially and seemingly exclusively to maritime conditions 3,000 miles and more from it. So in November, 1917, Admiral Benson himself went to London—apparently to examine into the bases of the recommendations made by Rear Admiral Sims and by Admiral Mayo, lest perchance the British had succeeded in "pulling the wool" over their eyes. The following extract from the testimony of Rear Admiral Sims, unrefuted by other testimony, portrays some of the results of this visit of Admiral Benson to London (see pp. 226 and 227, printed testimony):

When Admiral Benson finally arrived in England, in the middle of November, 1917, it took him only a few days to convince himself of the necessity of establishing a real advanced headquarters of the Navy Department abroad, with an adequate staff to make possible full cooperation with the Admiralty, to prepare plans for future operations, and adequately to cooperate with the Allies in coordinating all activities. I had been recommending such action for five months, and specifically in my letters of May 16, July 16, and October 23, had pointed out the necessity for the establishment of such an advanced headquarters abroad. Similar recommendation had been contained in many of the cables, as you may remember, which I have read you in the last few minutes.

Then on November 17, 1917, the department sent the following dispatch to Admiral Benson, then in London:

SIMSADUS:

1160. For Benson. After thinking carefully subject feel that it would be to advantage if we have a permanent war staff in England, as a part of the plans department of the Admiralty. If this meets your approval, additional officers will be sent to augment those already in England who are fitted for this work. 19016.

"BENSON."

As I have before explained "Benson" was a cable signature showing that the message emanated from the office of Naval Operations, so there will be no confusion when you see a message sent from Washington and signed "Admiral Benson," although Admiral Benson is on the other side.

Admiral Benson replied as follows on the following day (Nov. 18):

"(Very secret.)

"1530. Your 1160. Subject has been under discussion with Admiralty several days before receipt your message. Definite plans submitted to Admiralty. Am waiting decision. (Signed) Benson. 15118.

"SIMS."

On November 19 he sent a further cable, outlining fully his recommendations to carry out this plan. His cable was as follows:

"(Very secret.)

"To: CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS,
Washington:

"1550. For Secretary of the Navy:

"I have gone over the situation fully with British Admiralty, and outlined what I believe to be best plans for future naval operations, but am convinced that British are not prepared now to offer definite plans of their own for our consideration. From my observations, and after careful consideration, I believe that such plans, satisfactory to both countries, can not be developed until we virtually establish the strictly planning section for joint operations here, in order that the personnel thereof may be in position to obtain latest British and other allied information, and to urge, as joint plan, such plans as our estimate and policies may indicate. This action appears to be all the more necessary, considering the fact that any offensive operation which we may undertake must be in conjunction with British forces, and must be from bases established or occupied within British territorial waters.

"The officers detailed for this duty should come here fully imbued with our national and naval policies and ideas. Then, with the intimate knowledge they can obtain here from data available, actual disposition of allies forces reasons therefor, they will be in position to urge upon British any plan that promises satisfactory results.

"In order to initiate this policy, I recommend that Capt. Schofield and Commander Know be ordered to report to Vice Admiral Sims and Admiral Jellicoe, first sea lords, for this duty; a third officer to be selected after my return.

"This matter is an urgent one, and action should be taken at once.

"Capt. Pratt cable me his recommendations for officers to fill vacancies created thereby in department.

"Acknowledge. 19319. (Signed) Benson.'

"SIMS."

The department replied immediately, on November 21, with the following dispatch:

"(Very secret.)
"Simsadus.

"1230. For Benson. Your 1550 acknowledged: reply thereto. Schofield and Knox will be ordered.

"BENSON."

Thus, a recommendation which I had been making for six months was not carried into effect until Admiral Benson, during his short stay in London, convinced himself it was justified, and recommended to the Secretary the establishment of such a planning section for my staff in London.

It is hardly necessary to repeat that this is merely another instance of the attitude of the department during all of those first critical moments of the war. My recommendations for months were allowed to go unheeded. The efficiency of our cooperation with the Allies was seriously impeded during this period by the failure to act on the recommendations made by their representative abroad, who, in accordance with departmental instructions, was fully cooperating with the allied admiralties, and made these recommendations only after full consultation with them.

The soundness of the policy was again demonstrated by the fact that the department adopted it, and throughout the remainder of the war continued to recognize, though sometimes grudgingly, the necessity for what had been continually recommended and which should have been obvious from the very first.

The foregoing makes it evident that the Navy Department and Admiral Benson by taking steps to establish an American planning section in conjunction with that of the British Admiralty in London, were moving toward unity of planning even though not going the full distance to unity of command; and in doing this they tacitly admitted the impropriety of their initial abstention from unity of action.

If further evidence were needed as to the abandonment of the original policy of the Navy Department and the adoption of the practices that Rear Admiral Sims had long been recommending, it may be added that shortly after the arrival of Admiral Benson in London he at last came to realize the expediency of reenforcing the Grand Fleet with some American battleships and cabled the Navy Department so recommending on November 8. Whereupon Secretary Daniels cabled a reply, received on the 13th, saying that four ships would sail after they had been docked to put them in shape for overseas service. (See p. 76, printed testimony.)

SUMMARY AS TO THE POLICY OF THE NAVY DEPARTMENT.

Without going into more details, the foregoing would seem to furnish an adequate basis for deductions as to the general policy of the Navy Department under the immediate control of Secretary Daniels during the earlier part of our participation in the war. But any review of the naval policy of the United States during this

period should start with a clear recollection of several preceding matters seemingly of controlling influence.

First. In December, 1916, only four months prior to our entry into the war and after the war had been raging for over 28 months with all of the Germanic outrages upon the tenets of civilized humanity and with all of the Germanic violations of international law on sea and land, President Wilson announced officially to the world (*a*) his inability to distinguish between the objectives of the Allies and those of the Germanic Powers and (*b*), on January 22, 1917, his doctrine of "peace without victory."

Second. When the German declaration of unrestricted submarine warfare against the shipping of the world forced the United States to sever diplomatic relations with Germany, President Wilson during February and part of March, 1917, sought to avoid being forced into the war as a belligerent against Germany by attempting to give to the United States the status of "armed neutrality," a status which, if brought about, would have permitted all United States vessels to attempt to defend themselves by force of arms against attack by submarines without breach of neutrality and a status purely self-defensive and wholly self-interested. Up to within a month of the entry of the United States into the war, therefore, President Wilson had not given evidence that he had abandoned his strict mental neutrality or his desire for "peace without victory," nor had he evidenced concern in the war or in its outcome except as it touched the neutral interests of the United States and threatened to drag the United States into belligerency.

Third. The effort of President Wilson to prevent the participation of the United States in the war by withdrawing the country behind the wholly self-interested shield of "armed neutrality" seems to have predetermined the real attitude of the Administration, of which Secretary Daniels was a part, toward the rôle the Administration sought to make the Navy play in the war.

Fourth. The effort of President Wilson to bring about "armed neutrality" not only was not accompanied with any great effort to prepare the Navy for possible participation as a belligerent, but on the contrary the arming of merchant ships with naval guns and gun crews prior to our entry into the war seriously reduced the efficiency of the fleet by dispersing its skilled personnel on purely defensive missions on merchantmen instead of conserving and concentrating this skilled personnel for an offensive mission on destroyers.

Fifth. Secretary Daniels, while claiming in his sworn testimony on the one hand that "the Navy was ready from stem to stern," on the other hand alleged, in effect, that any naval preparation for our entry into the war prior to our declaration of the existence of a state of war would have been a breach of neutrality on our part; and he set up this latter contention as a reason why no special preparations had been made for antisubmarine warfare, though the evidence showed that over a year before our entry into the war he had inaugurated a naval building program of unprecedented magnitude which comprised primarily types of vessels potentially useful against the surface fleets of the Allies but of little or no avail against Germany so long as the Allies contained the latter country's surface fleets.

Sixth. The evidence shows that the fleet, consisting of 37 battleships, 32 cruisers, and 67 destroyers on the Navy list when we entered the

war, as a whole was in a woeful state of unpreparedness as to both matériel and personnel.

Seventh. From the foregoing it would seem that the natural conclusion would be not only that the United States entered the war with its Navy unprepared but it entered the war with President Wilson having expressed his hope of "peace without victory" only 10 days before we severed diplomatic relations with Germany, he having still more recently endeavored to dodge behind a self-interested "armed neutrality" in order to avoid belligerency, and that therefore the United States entered the war with an administration controlling the Navy Department, which administration was predisposed toward purely self-defensive measures and against aggressive measures in the common cause for victory over Germany.

Eighth. Further evidence of the Administration's predisposition toward purely self-defensive measures and against aggressive participation in the war is found in that at the end of March "the Atlantic Fleet is to be maintained in readiness for active operation, * * * fleet to continue intensive training of gun crews for armed guard duty." And further, that on April 4 "Orders were received to organize the patrol force on April 8, and to assign all destroyers that could be spared (from the fleet) to this (coast patrol) force," showing that on the day that President Wilson addressed Congress advising it to declare that a state of war existed with Germany, "all destroyers that could be spared" were to be assigned to home duties, apparently without any thought being given to the preparation of destroyers for dispatch overseas to carry on an aggressive warfare against the German submarines.

Such seemingly were the predispositions of mind which determined the policy controlling the human and material power of the Navy when war was declared. It is therefore not surprising that on April 10 Admiral Benson stated that "the present policy of the United States Navy was to maintain the fleet intact and to assist in the patrol of the Atlantic and Gulf coasts of the United States and waters adjacent thereto," this statement of policy being made in response to "a communication from the British Admiralty interrogating the representatives of the United States as to the nature of the assistance the United States Navy was prepared to render, and stating the desire of the British Admiralty for assistance, especially in antisubmarine craft."

In order to appreciate the utter inappropriateness of this stay-at-home, self-defensive, and nonaggressive policy of the Navy Department enunciated on April 10, 1917, by Admiral Benson, we would contrast with it some of the actual American naval operations effected after more or less delays by January 1, 1918.

On that last date there were 110 American naval vessels operating in European waters, all of which were afloat on the 6th of April and (excluding 23 yachts) 87 of which were on the Navy lists when we went into the war. Of these 110 naval vessels about three-fourths were for active antisubmarine warfare. Rear Admiral Sims, the British Admiralty, and the General Board, practically from the outset, had insisted that efforts should be concentrated immediately on antisubmarine warfare in the critical war zone above everything else. But until April 26 the Navy Department had not ordered any vessels even to prepare for overseas antisubmarine service except

six destroyers which arrived on May 4 "to show the flag." Consequently the subsequent arrivals of American antisubmarine forces in European waters between April and December, 1917, was very slow.

On January 1, 1918, there were four American battleships with the Grand Fleet. Beginning in April, 1917, Rear Admiral Sims had recommended that some American battleships be sent to European waters, and in July he had specifically urged that a division be sent to reenforce the Grand Fleet. Until November the Navy Department set its face sternly against a division of its main fighting fleet being sent to Europe to help win the war and specifically stated that it was conserving its capital ships for self-defense after the outcome of the war had been decided one way or the other. The recommendations of Rear Admiral Sims and of Admiral Mayo from London were inadequate to secure the detachment of these ships, and it required the recommendation of Admiral Benson himself, from London in November, before they were ordered overseas.

Practically throughout April, May, June, and July, Rear Admiral Sims had but one aid permanently on his staff exclusively. Throughout this period he was calling for something approximating adequate assistance and for the establishment of an American naval headquarters organization in London. During August his staff was increased to five officers. But only after Admiral Benson had visited London in November was he permitted to organize an adequate naval headquarters in which there were 25 officers by the 1st of January.

In many other respects his recommendations were long held up—often without even acknowledgment—during the most critical period of the war; he was left without any comprehensive statement of the policy of the Navy Department until July 10, 1917, and was not properly advised or supported by the Navy Department. But toward the end of 1917, the policies of the Navy Department were broken down by the obvious necessities of the war and essentially all of the recommendations of Rear Admiral Sims were put in operation—but only after, say, from three to seven months' delay.

In these circumstances it would seem that the initial policy of the Navy Department, in that it was entirely self-defensive and nonaggressive, and in that it did not contemplate aggressive operations where the issue of the naval war was in the balance, was entirely inappropriate and mistaken. It would seem that it adhered to this mistaken policy in important particulars during the crisis of the naval war and consequently that it invited defeat and that it did not contribute as effectively as it might have to as quick a winning of the war as might otherwise have been possible. For these mistaken policies it would seem inevitable that Secretary Daniels must be held directly responsible, but under President Wilson. And it would seem that all those who contributed to forcing the Navy Department to abandon the initial policy of Secretary Daniels's directly contributed to the winning of the war and saved the Navy of the United States from the otherwise inevitable charge that it had in fact abstained from active and determinative participation in the war—an abstention, it may be added, which might well have brought about a "peace without victory," if not a German victory and the ultimate defeat of the United States.

SECTION V.

GENERAL SUMMARY.

INTRODUCTORY.

At the close of his original statement before the subcommittee in this investigation, Rear Admiral Sims set up 13 contentions. (See p. 262, printed testimony.) While the evidence bore directly on these, there were in addition many other matters that were introduced by various witnesses and that broadened the scope of the naval lessons which the investigation has made apparent. But before dealing either with the contentions of Rear Admiral Sims or with the supplemental matters the committee makes the following findings:

First. We find that Rear Admiral Sims not only was within his rights in writing as he did to the Secretary of the Navy on January 7, 1920, concerning certain naval lessons of the war, but we find also that as Rear Admiral Sims was in a very responsible position during the war and knew that important lessons could be learned from his observations, it was his duty to write as he did making a frank and confidential criticism to the Secretary of the Navy.

Second. We find that in making his criticisms, as in his letter of January 7, 1920, Rear Admiral Sims intended to serve the Navy and the Nation and that he did render a great service, in addition to his service during the war, by pointing out naval conditions and mistakes which were not realized and which should be corrected in order that henceforth the Navy may be a still better servant of the Nation.

Third. We find that Rear Admiral Sims acted with entire propriety in reading his letter of January 7, 1920, before the subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Naval Affairs when the chairman of the subcommittee called upon Rear Admiral Sims to read it to the subcommittee.

After all other witnesses had been heard, including the Secretary of the Navy, Rear Admiral Sims was recalled before the subcommittee and given an opportunity to rebut such defenses as had been set up by witnesses for the Navy Department—or rather for the Secretary of the Navy, and one of the passages of particular interest in the testimony is that at the beginning of his rebuttal wherein Rear Admiral Sims takes up consecutively each one of his 13 contentions and quotes the testimony only of witnesses for the Secretary of the Navy as supporting essentially each and all of the Sims contentions. (See pp. 3180–3201, printed testimony.)

Rather than deal separately with the 13 contentions that Rear Admiral Sims set up and then treat of the other matters introduced in evidence by various witnesses in elaboration of the matters referred to by Rear Admiral Sims, it will be conducive to sequence and clarity if we submit our findings in groups dealing with (*a*) the preparedness

of the Navy for war, (*b*) the conduct of the naval war, and (*c*) the policy of the Navy Department as evidenced by its direction of the Navy before and during the war.

Among the following 74 specific findings are some that cover all of the contentions set up by Rear Admiral Sims, but in the sequence above suggested. And at the close of our itemized findings on page 129 there is given a summation in more general terms which states briefly our conclusions as to naval preparedness, the conduct of the war, and the policy of the Navy Department. But before entering upon the detailed findings, it may be well to outline the crux of the naval, maritime, and military situations during the participation of the United States in the war, and this for such light as such an outline may throw on the immediately ensuing findings.

The trend of the evidence taken at the naval investigation went to show that when the United States entered the war and for many months thereafter, as Mr. Hoover testified, "The situation was dangerous almost beyond description, and the anxiety in the whole of that period was terrific." (See p. 120, printed testimony.) This was because the unrestricted submarine campaign against allied and neutral shipping tonnage was so effective that it reduced the total tonnage left to within about 2 per cent of the absolute minimum requisite to carry on the allied cause.

The first disaster threatened by this shortage of ocean transport tonnage was that supplies to England and France might be so reduced that these countries would collapse in 1917. The second disaster threatened was that this shortage of tonnage would make it impossible to transport and support in France a sufficient force of American troops first to make it possible for the allied armies to withstand the assault the stronger Germanic armies made in the spring of 1918 and then to undertake the allied counteroffensive that led to the armistice of the following autumn. And it should be realized that a careful examination of the statistics of the maritime situation seems to make unavoidable the conclusion that if the sinkings produced by the German submarine campaign against tonnage had been only 10 per cent greater than they were, there would not have been left afloat enough ocean transport tonnage to supply England and France and to transport enough American troops to France to prevent defeat there in the spring of 1918 and to bring about victory in the following autumn.

In these circumstances the conclusion seems unavoidable that the most important and pressing maritime objective upon our entry into the war was to protect and conserve tonnage, first, in order that the civil populations of the allied countries might be fed and that their military effort might be sustained; and second, in order that the United States might place and sustain in France the military force necessary to give to the allied forces military preponderance there over the Germanic forces.

The history of the war subsequent to April, 1917, shows that between then and the early part of 1918, the allied cause, by a very narrow margin, escaped defeat threatened by the shrinkage in tonnage caused by the unrestricted submarine campaign. The subsequent history of the war shows also that in the spring of 1918 the allied armies were almost overwhelmed on the Western Front because of the

delay in getting sufficient troops there from the United States to give the allied armies surely adequate defensive power, if not preponderant offensive power; and Gen. Pershing's report states emphatically and repeatedly that dearth of tonnage was the principal retarding and restricting influence on the American military contingent. First the maritime crisis of 1917, and then the military crisis of 1918 resulted primarily from acute restriction of tonnage caused by the submarine campaign. That after the United States entered the war twice defeat seemed imminent because of inadequate ocean transport facilities makes it evident that upon the entry of the United States into the war, the first concern should have been to bring instant naval force in maximum possible quantity to bear against the submarine campaign, which lay at the root of the Germanic Powers twice coming close to victory after April, 1917.

FINDINGS AS TO PREPAREDNESS OF THE NAVY FOR WAR.

1. We find that on the day war broke out in Europe, August 1, 1914, the General Board of the Navy wrote Secretary Daniels warning him that the United States might be drawn into the war and that immediate steps should be taken to put the Navy in a state of preparedness. (See ante, pp. 22 and 23.)

2. We find that after this warning and advice Secretary Daniels was repeatedly, persistently, and adequately warned and urged by many of his professional advisers to put the Navy in a state of preparedness. (See ante, pp. 23 and 24.)

3. We find that though thus persistently advised, Secretary Daniels seems to have disregarded this advice and when on April 12, 1916, within a year of our being drawn into the war, the Senate called on him by resolution for a copy of the letter of August 1, 1914, from the General Board, as "warning the Navy Department of the necessity of bringing the Navy to a state of preparedness," as said letter did, Secretary Daniels not only withheld from the Senate the General Board's plea for preparedness, but he actually went to the length of writing to the Senate on April 21, 1916, in reply to its resolution, that "the letter of August 1, 1914, does not refer to the necessity of bringing the Navy to a state of preparedness." (See ante, pp. 22 and 23.)

4. We find that Secretary Daniels for over two years opposed and prevented the inauguration of the so-called administrative plan which was held to be an essential preliminary step toward such an organization of the Navy Department as would make it possible to prepare the Navy for war. (See ante, p. 23.)

5. We find that Secretary Daniels opposed the mandatory creation of a staff for a regular planning division and did not finally organize such a department until August 1, 1919. (See ante, pp. 24 and 25.

6. We find that Secretary Daniels did inaugurate in 1916 a building program of unprecedented magnitude, the types of vessels predominantly involved in it being such as to make it of potential use during the war only against the surface fleets of the Allies, so long as the latter's surface fleets contained the German surface fleets. Yet in spite of this unprecedented and at that time wrongly directed building program, the Navy Department claimed that had we built anti-

submarine craft other than those requisite as screening vessels for the fleet prior to our entry into the war, it would have been an unneutral act. And this contention was set up as an excuse for the dearth of antisubmarine craft with which we entered the war. (See ante, pp. 29 and 30.)

7. We find that Secretary Daniels overrode the General Board and forced it to withdraw its recommendation of 1915 that the personnel of the Navy be increased by 19,600 men, an increase deemed essential to the proper manning of the fleet then in being and that this action of his prevented the providing of adequate personnel prior to April, 1917. (See ante, pp. 30 and 31.)

8. We find that the opposition of Secretary Daniels to a proper planning division to a considerable extent caused the capital mistakes he made as to building programs and personnel and resulted in our entry into the war without the Navy Department having prepared any adequate and comprehensive plan for naval operations primarily against submarines, although it had for some time been evident that that was the kind of war we might be and were drawn into. (See ante, pp. 24 to 31.)

9. We find that in February, 1917, Secretary Daniels made a capital mistake in permitting the navy yards to concentrate on putting in matériel condition 5 more battleships and 4 more cruisers in addition to the 12 battleships and 18 cruisers then already in matériel condition for war service when but 6 of our 67 destroyers were in such condition of readiness. Had the navy yard facilities been adequate and had their effort been directed to the conditioning of the type of vessels most essential for the kind of warfare into which we were going, we could have entered the war on April 6, 1917, with 58 destroyers in instant matériel readiness for war service. That we entered the war with but 6 (and these not ready for instant overseas duty) was due solely to misdirection of the efforts of the navy yards under Secretary Daniels between February 2 and April 6, 1917. (See ante, pp. 31–38.)

10. We find that it was not until October, 1917, that the navy yards (with the assistance of private establishments) were able to put essentially all of the fleet in existence on April 6 in matériel condition for war service. From the thus proven fact that it took over six months after war was declared to put our existing fleet in matériel condition for war we find conclusive evidence not only of the unpreparedness of the fleet as to matériel condition, but as to the utter inadequacy of the then existing shore establishment to support the fleet. This matter should be the subject of a special professional investigation looking to the future. (See ante, pp. 35–38.)

11. Although Secretary Daniels asserted under oath in his testimony that when we went into the war "The Navy was ready from stem to stern" (see p. 3064, printed testimony), we find from statistics especially prepared by the Navy Department that on April 6, 1917, nearly two-thirds of our battleships, cruisers, and destroyers then afloat required "material repairs essential for war service," which on the average amounted to 56 days per vessel. And we find from these statistics that six months after we went into the war some of these vessels were still in the navy yards being made ready. (See ante, pp. 31–38.)

12. We find that these statistics compiled by the Navy Department also showed that nearly nine-tenths of our battleships, cruisers, and destroyers did not have their full war complements of personnel on April 6, 1917, having on the average, but 55 per cent thereof. These statistics show that of those vessels put in repair for war service during 1917, some did not receive their full complements of personnel until into 1918. The essential point in this matter of personnel is that on April 6, 1917, our Navy was so undermanned because of the policy of Secretary Daniels, as previously mentioned, that but little over one-tenth of the war vessels of our fleet then had their full war complements of personnel. (See ante, p. 34.)

Admirals Benson, Badger, and McKean, and Capt. Pratt, all witnesses for Secretary Daniels, all testified emphatically that the Navy was not ready for war on April 6, 1917. (See pp. 3183–3186, printed testimony.)

FINDINGS AS TO THE CONDUCT OF THE NAVAL WAR.

Passing from the question of the degree of preparedness of the Navy for war to that of the conduct of the Navy in the war we would summarize our findings as follows:

13. We find that Secretary Daniels promptly became advised of the extremely critical situation, "dangerous almost beyond description," in which the whole allied cause found itself upon our entry into the war on April 6, 1917. And we find that he got these advices from such independent and authoritative sources as French and British naval officers and missions that began to come to Washington within a few days after our entry into the war; from our ambassador in London; from the advance officer Secretary Daniels had sent to London especially to get such information among other things; and that Mr. Hoover so reported to President Wilson. (See ante, pp. 17 and 18, 42–46, and 59–66.)

14. We find that as soon as it became advised of the critical situation, the General Board of the Navy in Washington joined in this advice to Secretary Daniels so that with the possible exception of the organization that had to express its views through Admiral Benson, the personal appointee of Secretary Daniels, there was practical unanimity of statement to Secretary Daniels as to the nature of the extremely critical maritime situation then confronting the United States and the Allies. (See ante, pp. 42–46.)

15. We find that at essentially the same time that Secretary Daniels was thus authoritatively advised of the critical situation, he was professionally and authoritatively advised from separate sources as to what action should be taken. Among the sources of such advice were, the United States naval attaché in London, speaking for "the highest authorities" there, the British and French naval officers who visited Washington on the fifth day after our entrance into the war, and those who shortly came there with British and French missions, Rear Admiral Sims reporting by cable and letter after conferences with the highest naval authorities in London and the General Board in Washington after it had conferred with the British and French naval officers who came there. (See ante, pp. 42–46, 59–66.)

16. We find not only that Secretary Daniels had been adequately advised as to the critical state of affairs and that there was practical unanimity among his professional advisors, excepting Admiral Benson, that concentrated offensive effort should be made immediately against the submarines in the critical war zone, but we find that the General Board backed up its insistent advice that 200 antisubmarine craft be sent to the critical war zone immediately by telling Secretary Daniels in detail that there were over 200 such craft available for such concentrated offensive antisubmarine effort and over 2,000 naval guns of from 3 to 6 inch caliber available wherewith to arm such craft as were unarmed. (See ante, pp. 44 and 45.)

17. We find that this practical unanimity of professional advice, excepting that of Admiral Benson, coming from separate and eminent naval authorities, was founded on the realization that, with the German surface fleets contained by those of the Allies, Germany could not do any great material damage to the United States such as to require great defensive efforts, but on the contrary the most important function the naval forces of the United States could perform was (*a*) to help save sufficient merchant tonnage from the submarines to carry on the sustenance and supplying of the civil populations and armies of the Allies, thus preventing their defeat by starvation, and (*b*) to help bring about such safety of maritime transportation that an adequate increment of American troops, essential for military preponderance and victory, could be transported with their supplies and in time to forestall military defeat.

In short, defensive actions might be postponed at the risk of relatively unimportant damage to American coastal interests; but offensive naval action had to be taken against the submarines in time to prevent the collapse of the Allies by starvation and in time to enable the American Expeditionary Forces to arrive at the battle front before the Allies should be overwhelmed there. In this latter connection especial attention is invited to the summary of Gen. Pershing's report given herein and beginning on page 51, and particularly to the quotation on pages 53 and 54 hereof.

18. We find from examination of Gen. Pershing's final report as commander in chief of the American Expeditionary Forces (see ante, pp. 51–58):

(*a*) That those forces were necessary to the maintenance of the allied western front against the onslaughts of the enemy in the spring of 1918.

(*b*) That those forces were the increment that made it possible to assume the offensive and win a military victory on the western front later in 1918.

(*c*) That the magnitude, and hence the striking power, of the American Expeditionary Forces at any given time was determined primarily by the limitations imposed by the inadequacy of ocean transport in 1917 and 1918.

(*d*) That, as Gen. Pershing says, as ocean transport was "the main factor in the problem" of getting enough troops to France and to the front in time, the military issue in France depended on the speed and degree of success with which the submarine campaign to impede ocean transport was defeated.

19. Consequently we find that not only the sustenance of the Allies, but particularly the safe and speedy transportation of the American Expeditionary Forces and of their supplies was dependent on speedy action against the submarines and their campaign against tonnage.

20. Reverting to the professional advices given Secretary Daniels about the time we entered the war, and recalling that all except Admiral Benson recommended concentration of offensive effort against the submarines, we find that at that time the practice was to arm merchantmen with one or more guns and allow them to travel singly, each taking its chance. That by this system of "dispersion" it might not meet a submarine, but that if it did the protective gun would prevent its being sunk by gunfire from the submarine and oblige the latter to attack only by torpedo, from which attack there was no defensive except speed and zigzagging—although the most valuable vessels were escorted individually by destroyers in the danger zone. (See ante, p. 69.) Coupled with these defensive measures we find that an offensive effort was being made against the submarine by patrolling the areas of the seas and ocean with antisubmarine craft. (See ante, pp. 66–69.)

21. We find also that in contrast to this system of "dispersion and patrol" there had been contemplated the system of "concentration and escort of convoy," which aimed first to make it more difficult for submarines to find merchantmen by denuding the seas of stray "dispersed" vessels because they would be concentrated into "convoys," which convoys would be protected against raiders by cruiser escorts and against submarines by an escort of a number of seagoing antisubmarine craft. (See ante, pp. 69–71.)

22. We find that when we entered the war all advices to Secretary Daniels looking to concentration of offensive effort against the submarines seemed with one exception to contemplate a continuance of the "dispersion" of armed merchantmen and looked merely to increasing the antisubmarine offensive by increasing the number of antisubmarine patrol craft. But we find that Rear Admiral Sims, in his second dispatch (Apr. 19, 1917, see ante, p. 62), expressed his disagreement with those at the British Admiralty who had formed the conclusion that a convoy system was impracticable because, as was alleged by merchant masters, merchantmen were incompetent to travel and maneuver in convoy on account of the danger of collision. And the British Admiralty had decided against the "convoy escort" system also because they lacked 44 cruisers and 133 seagoing antisubmarine craft of the total numbers then estimated as requisite for the full application of the convoy system. (See ante, pp. 71 and 72.)

23. We find that in addition to this initial decision against the convoy system, seemingly held at the British Admiralty until after the arrival of Rear Admiral Sims in London, the Navy Department in Washington opposed it after the department knew that the first experimental convoy actually had arrived successfully in May. Specifically on June 18, 1917, Rear Admiral Sims was cabled from the Navy Department:

> Regarding convoy, I consider that American vessels with armed guards on board are safer when sailing independently. (See ante, p. 72.)

And apparently as late as July, 1917, the Navy Department was still unconvinced that troop transports sailing in convoy were safer than when sailing alone; for on the 9th of that month Rear Admiral

Sims received a cable from the Navy Department asking him the question:

Do you think that they (troop transports) should sail in company or singly? (See ante, p. 73.)

24. We find that, when the convoy system had been put in partial operation, Admiral Mayo reported to the Secretary of the Navy on October 11, 1917:

It appears that the system of protection for convoys now in operation is efficient so far as the resources available permit. The losses of vessels in convoy to the losses of vessels not in convoy is at present 1 to 20. (See p. 640, printed testimony.)

25. We find that in view of Rear Admiral Sims's written advocacy of the convoy system first in spite of the initial conclusion of the British Admiralty against it, and then of his maintained advocacy of it in spite of more enduring opposition to it in the American Navy Department, it would seem that he primarily should be accredited with its establishment, and with the good results it produced in saving tonnage and more especially in saving the lives of American troops in transit. But it should be added that he has abstained from laying any claims to being recognized as the one most responsible for the inauguration of the convoy system.

26. We find that apart from the more persistent opposition above referred to, the principal difficulty in the inauguration and broad development of the convoy system was the allied lack (*a*) of cruiser escorts for defense against surface raiders, and (*b*) of antisubmarine craft for defense against submarines. (See ante, pp. 71 and 72.)

27. We find that though Secretary Daniels had been adequately and separately advised professionally by all authorities, except Admiral Benson, that antisubmarine craft should be concentrated immediately and in as great offensive power as possible against the submarines in the critical war zone, yet Secretary Daniels did not issue such orders that any antisubmarine craft sailed from the United States for the war zone before April 24, 1917, when after a delay of over two weeks only six destroyers were ordered abroad. (See ante, p. 68.)

28. We find that on May 3, 1917, the General Board wrote Secretary Daniels in part as follows (see ante, p. 44):

Unless armed patrol craft, destroyer, and any surface craft able to keep the sea are dispatched in the next few weeks, they will be too late to prevent disaster to England first and to France second.

Fifty armed surface craft dispatched now would be a "real help." Two hundred sent now would do much to prevent the disaster which threatens England especially.

And we find that the General Board gave practical form to this recommendation by telling Secretary Daniels in the same letter that there were then over 200 such vessels available on the Atlantic coast of the United States. (See ante, p. 45.)

But we find that Secretary Daniels so managed the Navy that American antisubmarine vessels had arrived in European waters only as indicated by the following cumulative schedule (see ante, p. 69):

	Total number in European waters on each date.		Total number in European waters on each date.
April	None.	Sept. 1	52
May 1	None.	Oct. 1	67
June 1	18	Nov. 1	90
July 1	28	Dec. 1	90
Aug. 1	45		

29. We find that all of these vessels were afloat on April 6, 1917, and that the great majority of them were in the United States Navy on that date. That the great majority of them did not appear in European waters long before they actually did would seem to show either that they were unprepared or that it was not the will of Secretary Daniels that they go to Europe sooner, and this in spite of the insistent advice of the General Board, Rear Admiral Sims, and others. Whether they were unprepared or whether they were held back, the responsibility for their delayed arrival in European waters rests on the shoulders of Secretary Daniels.

30. In view of the generally expressed opinion that disaster would overtake the allied cause in the summer or latter part of 1917 because of the submarine campaign, unless considerable American anti-submarine forces were promptly dispatched to the critical war zone, and in view of the fact that such a disaster was avoided, although by a narrow margin, and although there was great delay in sending anti-submarine forces overseas, we are led to conclude that disaster was avoided mainly because of the superior efficiency of the convoy system, which we have found was inaugurated primarily on the initiative of Rear Admiral Sims.

31. We find that although Rear Admiral Sims had recommended in his earlier dispatches that some American battleships be sent abroad as reenforcement, his urgent and repeated requests for them were long left unanswered by the Navy Department under a policy set up by Secretary Daniels. But we find that when Admiral Benson arrived in London in November, 1917, and realized the situation, the battleships after many months of delay were ordered over and arrived only in December. (See ante, pp. 77–79.)

32. We find that from the earliest days of our participation in the war the General Board and Rear Admiral Sims had recommended that American submarines be sent to Europe to help hunt German submarines, and that the requests of Rear Admiral Sims for them were left unanswered by the Navy Department until the late summer of 1917, when orders were at last given for the dispatch of 10 of them, of which 5 arrived in October, 1917, and 5 more early in 1918. (See ante, pp. 88 and 89.)

33. We find that Rear Admiral Sims had been given officially the title of "Commander United States Naval Forces Operating in European Waters" on June 14, 1917, and that as such he was not only responsible for naval operations in the zone of his command, but was in council with the allied naval command which centered in London and was called on to devise and carry out with the allied naval forces the measures of American naval cooperation in European waters. (See ante, pp. 47–50.)

34. In view of this and in view of the failure of the Navy Department not only to furnish him with the forces he requested and of which the Navy list shows there was a plenty in the United States, but furthermore in view of the protracted failure of the Navy Department even to acknowledge receipt of his requests for such specific forces as battleships, submarines, and tugs, we find the conclusion unavoidable that the Navy Department, for some reason or other, had been very lacking in the degree of support it gave to the officer it had made European force commander and whom it held

esponsible for naval operations in European waters. (See ante, pp. 59 and 90.)

35. In view of this lack of support, extending even to persistent failure not only to advise him of the Navy Department's decisions on his requests but to failure even to acknowledge receipt of his requests, thus keeping him in entire ignorance of its policies with regard to them, we are forced to infer that not only were his official negotiations with the allied naval authorities subjected to serious and unnecessary embarrassment, but that the expedition and efficiency of the naval results emanating from them can not but have been seriously impaired through the fault of the Navy Department under the policies set up by Secretary Daniels.

36. We find that although the General Board had recommended on April 5, 1917, that Rear Admiral Sims be sent to London with a specially chosen staff of seven officers for research and coordination work, and although by July he had been made a vice admiral and European force commander over nearly 50 naval vessels, with general headquarters in London and operating bases in Ireland and France, and was the acting representative of the Navy Department with the allied naval command centering in London, yet it was not until the end of July that the Navy Department allowed him more than one permanent naval aid for his headquarters work, and this in spite of his having repeatedly called for more professional assistance. (See ante, pp. 46–50)

37. We find that the conclusion seems unavoidable that by failing to provide Rear Admiral Sims with assistance, even remotely approximating the magnitude, intricacy, and responsibility of the duties put upon him, Secretary Daniels not only seems to have put upon Rear Admiral Sims a task almost beyond human capacity, but that he evidently made it impossible for Rear Admiral Sims to perform his highly important duties with anything approximating the thoroughness that was called for by the naval and military interests of the United States and of the Allies.

38. We find that whereas Secretary Daniels had failed to have the Navy even approximately prepared for war, and had failed to have the conditioning of immediately useful antisubmarine forces given full priority over forces not immediately needed after we entered the war, and had failed to use due expedition in sending to the war zone those forces, such as antisubmarine craft, battleships, and submarines that were called for there by proper professional authority and were essentially available in the United States, Secretary Daniels showed either that he was sadly lacking in proper appreciation of the military value of time or that he, for some other purpose, did not give proper weight to the professional opinion of those naval officers, such as the General Board, the British and French naval officers in Washington, and Rear Admiral Sims, who were all urging immediate offensive action in maximum force in the critical war zone.

39. We find that whereas Secretary Daniels had not only failed to concentrate available forces in the critical war zone, but had held them out of the critical zone and had contemplated scattering them to minor theaters, he either failed to appreciate the basic military principle of concentration of effort or, for some other purpose, he chose not to act as suggested by those of his professional advisors who recommended concentration. (See ante, p. 68.)

40. We find that the attempt of the Navy Department to direct from Washington the details incident to the escorting of the first troop convoys in the summer of 1917 through the submarine zone evidenced its attempt to direct in detail measures overseas and over the head of its commanding officer in that area who was responsible for results there. (See ante, pp. 72 and 73.)

41. In the subsequent acceptance by the Navy Department of the convoy plans drawn up by Rear Admiral Sims, and in the Navy Department's superseding of its own convoy plans by his, we find evidence that after some avoidable delay the Navy Department itself recognized its own initial error and the correctness of the position taken by Rear Admiral Sims in this respect.

42. Although the Navy Department had had this experience in 1917 in connection with planning for the protection of convoys against submarines, we find that nevertheless, in the matter of planning to protect convoys aganst battle-cruiser raids in 1918, the Navy Department long insisted, and at great risk to Atlantic shipping, that its plans be used instead of the Sims-British plans, although the convoy system in the war zone was being run from London and most of the convoys were British. (See ante, pp. 79–82.)

43. In the subsequent acceptance by the Navy Department of the plans drawn in London for the protection of convoys against raiders and in these plans being substituted for the Navy Department's plans, we find that the Navy Department recognized after long delay its initial error and the superiority of the plans advanced by Rear Admiral Sims.

44. We find in such matters as the planning for protection of convoys against raiders and submarines conclusive illustration and proof that the Navy Department violated military principles by arriving at detailed decisions upon inadequate premises and that by making such decisions pertaining to joint operations of the American and allied naval forces in the war zone over the head of its force commander there, the Navy Department itself persistently violated the principle of unity of command.

45. As to the North Sea mine barrage: We find that the original suggestion for this undertaking in the Navy Department contemplated the use of 750,000 mines of a special type but that the plan as urged upon Rear Admiral Sims by the Navy Department in the summer of 1917 considered using some 300,000 of the unsatisfactory standard "horn" type of mine. During the crisis of the naval war in the summer of 1917 Rear Admiral Sims opposed then expending effort on this undertaking which would not contain the submarines, if at all, until essentially all the 300,000 mines had been manufactured and laid, an operation that could not be completed until well into 1918; and in initially opposing it under these circumstances, Rear Admiral Sims pointed out that what was needed was not a great undertaking that might be effective at the end of a year of labor but immediate concentration of effort against the submarine campaing which in the summer of 1917 threatened the allied cause with defeat in the very near future.

But in the autumn of 1917 the Bureau of Ordnance developed a new type of mine of such character that only about 100,000 would be required. Thereupon, and as the convoy system was beginning to

get the upper hand of the submarine campaign, the British Admiralty and Rear Admiral Sims decided in favor of the North Sea mine barrage with the new type of mine used as an auxiliary and supplementary effort against the submarines. And we find that in point of fact after their decision had been made they had to wait for the confirmatory decision of the Navy Department. (See ante, pp. 83, 87, 105, and 106.)

46. We find that in the light of the full history of the North Sea mine barrage the allegations of Secretary Daniels to the effect that Rear Admiral Sims had "lacked vision" in connection with this great undertaking and had delayed its completion by six months were allegations unwarranted by the facts.

47. We find that the many interferences by the Navy Department with operations under Rear Admiral Sims's command, as previously instanced, showed that the Navy Department had failed to support him clearly in authority in the command for which it held him responsible; it also failed to support him with reasonably adequate advices, failed to support him with forces available, and failed to support him with a personnel commensurate to the efficient performance of his duties, and that in all this the Navy Department persistently violated some of the basic principles underlying the sound practice both of civil and of military command and responsibility.

48. We find that after delays ranging from a few weeks to almost a year the Navy Department eventually adopted practically all of the more important recommendations made by Rear Admiral Sims, such as concentration of effort against the submarines in the critical war zone, the adoption of the convoy system, the sending of submarines to help hunt submarines, the sending of battleships to reinforce the Grand Fleet, etc., and we find that the eventual adoption and retention throughout the balance of the war of such recommendations as were made by Rear Admiral Sims in his early dispatches show conclusively that the Navy Department committed a military mistake in allowing such lengthy delays to intervene between the receipt of the recommendations of Rear Admiral Sims and the putting of them in practice.

49. We find that the eventual putting in practice of the recommendations of Rear Admiral Sims facilitated and seems to have been essential to the sustenance of the Allies and to the addition to their military land forces of that increment of force which raised them from military inferiority in the spring of 1918 to military superiority in the following summer and brought military victory in the autumn. We find the conclusion unavoidable, therefore, that this increment of American military force in 1918 shortened the war even though, as Gen. Pershing points out, it was delayed by conditions of ocean transport, which latter, as he says, was "the main factor in the problem." As this increment of American military force was admittedly delayed by ocean transport conditions, and as the improvement of ocean transport conditions was so evidently retarded by the delay on the part of Secretary Daniels to bring promptly into full practice the recommendations for the convoy system and for offensive concentration in the critical naval war zone against the submarine, it is difficult to see why the war would not have been further shortened had these delays not occurred. Indeed, it would seem that Secretary Daniels, by preventing the United States Navy from promptly con-

centrating its forces on the improvement of ocean transport conditions in 1917, prevented the United States Army from making an earlier concentration in preponderant force in France, and thus he prevented the American Expeditionary Forces from ending the war sooner than they actually did. But the extent by which the war might have been shortened we find to be entirely conjectural.

In concluding here that section of our summary that deals with the conduct of the naval war, we would recall to mind not only the great unpreparedness of the Navy as to plans, personnel, and matériel for the kind of warfare being carried on when we entered the war, but more particularly would we recall some of the more important matters pertaining to the subsequent conduct of the naval war.

Upon our entry into the war Secretary Daniels was made aware of how extremely critical the situation was, and the overwhelming preponderance of professional advice given him was that it was most essential to concentrate offensively against the submarine in the critical war zone. This he did only to the merely formal extent of sending six destroyers "to show the flag." Effort was soon made by Rear Admiral Sims to inaugurate the convoy system, but the Navy Department seems not to have concurred in this whole-heartedly until after about three months had elapsed. Instead of concentrating attention and effort on the immediate problem of saving tonnage and sinking submarines, the Navy Department put forward schemes like the North Sea mine barrage that could not be carried out for a year or so. For many months such available forces as battleships, antisubmarine submarines, and tugs were called for overseas, but in vain; and it was not until toward the very end of 1917 that the naval operations Rear Admiral Sims and others had recommended in April and May were put well into practice.

As Secretary Daniels came to adopt these operations ultimately, though after a long delay, and as they proved so successful that they were continued to the end of the war, there can be no question that those who early recommended them were right. It remains, therefore, to account for the reason why Secretary Danials permitted a delay averaging, say, six months to occur before they were put in practice.

Two groups of possible reasons present themselves as likely explanations of the causes of the distressing and dangerous delays that we have seen occurred. It might have been that it was solely because of unpreparedness of the Navy in personnel and matériel that it took over six months before it could adequately carry out the offensive operations recommended. But we know, for instance, that some American battleships were ready very early in the war and yet were held back from the war zone for many months. And the whole trend of the testimony of Secretary Daniels was an effort to establish the adequate preparedness of the Navy so as to account for delays in action not because of unpreparedness but because of policy. It remains, therefore, to summarize the matters pertaining to policy as the latter may have controlled naval operations.

FINDINGS AS TO THE POLICY OF THE NAVY DEPARTMENT.

50. While the evidence failed to reveal the existence of any plan or policy of a comprehensive and operative nature looking to prompt

nd aggressive antisubmarine warfare, we find, on the contrary, that ast before our entry into the war the policy of holding the Atlantic leet in readiness for active fleet operations was given its comander in chief, and he was further instructed to assign all detroyers that could be spared to the force being organized to patrol merican waters. (See ante, p. 91.)

51. We find that on April 10 and 11 conferences occurred in or near Washington between naval representatives of France and Britain and he highest American naval authorities, including Secretary Daniels, at which conferences the British representative specifically stated Britain's need of naval assistance, "especially in antisubmarine craft," and that as response to this particular request orders were then for the first time issued to prepare six destroyers for overseas service. (See ante, pp. 91–93.)

52. We find that Secretary Daniels testified as to the second of these conferences that "complete cooperation with the French and British was arranged" and that "Admiral Mayo and every other person who was present can testify to the fact that the British and French representatives were impressed by the cordiality with which their suggestions and requests were received and complied with and the evident disposition of the representatives of the United States Navy to accord the Allies every possible assistance." (See ante, pp. 91 and 92.)

53. We find that between April 11 and April 26 no orders were issued even to prepare any more destroyers than the first six for overseas antisubmarine service, but that between April 26 and May 1 orders were issued to prepare 36 additional destroyers for such service. (See ante, pp. 94–96.)

54. We find that between the 11th of April and the early part of May not only was Rear Admiral Sims calling for all possible antisubmarine craft but Admiral Lord Jellicoe was instructing the British naval representatives by cable as follows:

> Press most strongly that the number of destroyers sent to Ireland should be increased to 24 at once if this is possible.
>
> Urge upon the authorities that everything should give way to the submarine menace and that by far the most important place on which to concentrate patrols is the southwest of Ireland. (See ante, p. 95.)

55. We find that it would seem, therefore, that "complete cooperation with the French and British" was not arranged at the conference of April 11 and that the positive testimony of Secretary Daniels that complete cooperation was arranged must be taken as misleading.

56. From the fact that the British representative at the conference of April 11 had instructions from the Admiralty to state "the desire of the British Admiralty for assistance, especially in antisubmarine craft" and from the fact that after that conference the Admiralty pressed with extreme urgency for more assistance than the six destroyers granted at that conference, we find it difficult to believe that six destroyers represented the full measure of the request for antisubmarine assistance presented by the British at that conference.

57. On the other hand, from the fact that between April 11 and April 26 no orders were issued even for the preparation of additional destroyers for overseas antisubmarine service, we find ourselves forced to the conclusion that, having granted six destroyers on April 11,

the Navy Department then rested on the intention not to send any further destroyers overseas in the near future.

58. In explanation of such abstention from prompt and aggressive overseas operations we find that the initial requests of the British and French for naval assistance had been met on April 10 by the following statement of policy:

> Admiral Benson stated that the present policy of the United States was to maintain the fleet intact and to assist in the patrol of the Atlantic and Gulf coasts of the United States and waters adjacent thereto. (See ante, p. 92.)

59. We find that this initial policy was one of total abstention from any naval operations of an aggressive nature overseas; and we find that this is further shown by the following statement of its limited modification at the conference of the next day, April 11:

> Although the present policy of the United States required that the fleet be kept intact, a division of (six) destroyers will be sent to European waters to cooperate with the allied antisubmarine forces in that area. United States to patrol off Atlantic coast of United States and assist in patrol of Caribbean Sea and Gulf of Mexico. (See ante, p. 93.)

60. In the light of such circumstances, in addition to the unpreparedness evidenced, we find it impossible not to conclude that until about the 28th of April the policy of the Navy Department as given it by or through Secretary Daniels, did not contemplate any prompt overseas naval assistance to the Allies against the submarines on a scale commensurate to our naval equipment, but on the contrary, that Secretary Daniels then intended to keep all but the pittance of six destroyers out of aggressive warfare and in American waters. In short, he then manifested no intention to participate energetically in striking down the submarine menace but gave his first thought to home patrols lest perhaps some few of the submarines infesting European waters might appear in American waters. In military terms a purely defensive policy was being imposed on the United States Navy and it was being prevented from assuming the offensive by Secretary Daniels.

61. We find in this adequate explanation of the lack of attention paid to the earliest recommendations by Rear Admiral Sims for prompt and aggressive action in as large force as possible in the critical area of the submarine war.

62. But in that between April 26 and May 1, 36 additional destroyers were ordered to prepare for service overseas, we find evidence that the recommendations of Rear Admiral Sims in this respect were warranted and that the initial policy of Secretary Daniels to abstain from overseas offensive antisubmarine warfare was wrong and caused a delay of essentially one month.

63. We find that though a total of 42 destroyers had been ordered to prepare for overseas service by the 1st of May it was after the last of October before they all arrived in European waters (see ante, p. 96).

64. We find that as it took over five months to prepare and dispatch all of these destroyers, we are forced to infer either that their unpreparedness was greater than was stated, or that the navy yards were inadequate to put this flotilla in shape in less time, or that the navy yards allowed other work to take precedence over preparing the vessels most needed for immediate offensive warfare.

65. We find that in view of the fact that most of the battleships and cruisers required "material repairs essential for war service" when we went into the war and received these repairs during the summer of 1917, we are forced to the conclusion that during the summer of 1917 the navy yards did not concentrate their efforts on putting the destroyers in shape for overseas service. (See ante, pp. 34 and 37.)

66. As the General Board in its letter of May 3, 1917, had urged that the preparation of antisubmarine craft be given priority to the exclusion of everything else that might retard it, as the consensus of naval opinion was that it was antisubmarine craft that were most needed, and yet as the navy yards did not concentrate on preparing the destroyers for overseas service, we find the conclusion unavoidable that all due effort was not used to expedite the dispatch of the destroyers and that this evidenced that after May 1 and into the summer Secretary Daniels was not yet manifesting due diligence to concentrate on aggressive operations in the common cause against the submarines but on the contrary was expending great efforts on battleships not then urgently needed for the war against Germany. (See ante, p. 45.)

67. We find that the naval facts brought to light make unavoidable the conclusion that upon our entry into the war Secretary Daniels had prevented the United States Navy from immediately taking aggressive action in force against the German submarines and had imposed upon the Navy a stay-at-home, purely self-defensive, and nonaggressive policy. But we recall that but a month before we entered the war President Wilson was criticizing Congress for having failed to accede to his desire that the United States assume the status of "armed neutrality," a status purely self-defensive and permitting abstention from belligerency in aid of either the Germanic Powers or of the Entente Allies. And, furthermore, we recall that it was but four months before we entered the war that President Wilson had officially stated to the world his inability to differentiate between the objectives of the two groups of belligerents. Indeed, as late as January 22, 1917, he had declared his desire for "peace without victory." The conclusion seems inevitable, therefore, that with such recent predispositions on the part of the Administration, it was but only too natural that its naval policy would at first be defensive rather than aggressive. (See ante, pp. 40, 94, and 100 and 101.)

68. While there was a predisposition toward abstention from aggressive participation, which changed only gradually between the initial statement of nonaggressive policy made early in April, 1917, and the latter part of June, we find that there was not given any outline of change of policy to the commander in chief of the Atlantic Fleet until June 23, 1917, or to the European force commander until July 10, 1917. (See ante, pp. 98 and 104.)

69. We find, however, that on June 23, 1917, in a letter to the Department of State, Secretary Daniels made what appears to be the first outline of the policy of the Navy Department since the early days of our entry into the war and that a copy of it was sent on that day to Admiral Mayo, commander in chief of the Atlantic Fleet, but that the commander of the United States naval forces operating in European waters was kept in ignorance of it for over two weeks, when it was cabled to him on July 10. (See ante, pp. 98 and 104.)

70. We find that after statements as to general policy this letter concluded with the following paragraph (see ante, pp. 231–232):

(6) Pursuant to the above general policy, the Navy Department announces as its general plan of action the following:

(*a*) Its willingness to send its minor fighting forces, comprised of destroyers, cruisers, submarine chasers, auxiliaries, in any numbers not incompatible with home needs, and to any field of action deemed expedient by the joint allied admiralties, which would not involve a violation of our present State policy.

(*b*) Its unwillingness, as a matter of policy, to separate any division from the main fleet for service abroad, although it is willing to send the entire battleship fleet abroad to act as a united but cooperating unit when, after joint consultations of all admiralties concerned, the emergency is deemed to warrant it and the entire tension imposed upon the lines of communication due to the increase in the number of fighting ships in European waters will stand the strain upon it.

(*c*) Its willingness to discuss more fully plans for joint operations.

Sincerely, yours,

JOSEPHUS DANIELS.

To the honorable the SECRETARY OF STATE.

In other words, on June 23 Secretary Daniels at last announced his willingness to undertake aggressive antisubmarine warfare in so far as it was "not incompatible with home needs," etc., but his unwillingness to reenforce the battle fleets of the Allies except with the whole American battle fleet; and it should be realized that in effect this was equivalent to a complete refusal, for at that time the lines of communication were so severely strained that it was with difficulty that the oil-burning ships of the Allies were being supplied with fuel. (See ante, p. 102.)

71. In that Secretary Daniels was not "prepared to announce" confidentially to the State Department a policy of aggressive antisubmarine warfare until June 23, we find confirmatory evidence of the persistence to a greater or less extent and until about that time of the initial entirely nonaggressive policy stated upon our entry into the war shortly after Congress had made it impossible to retain an official status of nonaggression and nonassistance to either group of belligerents by refusing President Wilson's plea for "armed neutrality."

72. But we find that the above quoted aggressive policy as to antisubmarine forces and conservative policy as to the main fighting fleet was preceded by the following statement of policy in this same letter that Secretary Daniels wrote (see ante, p. 98):

(3) A realization that, while a successful termination of the present war must always be the first allied aim and will probably result in diminished tension throughout the world, the future position of the United States must in no way be jeopardized by any disintegration of our main fighting fleets.

Having in mind how carefully President Wilson had abstained from designating the Allies as our allies and how persistently he had described the United States as merely "associated" with them in the war against Germany, we find in the above quoted statement a sharp differentiation of the policy of the United States from the "allied" aim. At least the conclusion seems unavoidable that the primary motive was not to do everything possible to help win the war—as the American people were being asked to do by the Administration—but rather the predominant thought seems to have looked to the future of the United States apart from the Allies and as though the latter might be defeated or "peace without victory" might still be looked for, and that, in that event, it behooved the

United States to conserve her fleets so as to retain the balance of power. (See ante, pp. 99–103.)

73. We find that while the policy of aggressive antisubmarine warfare was first stated by Secretary Daniels on June 23, 1917, it did not suffice for Admiral Mayo to visit the war zone in September, 1917, and recommend more thorough cooperation on the part of the Navy Department in general accordance to the recommendations made by Rear Admiral Sims. We find that it was not until Admiral Benson had visited London in November, 1917, that the conservationist policy of the Navy Department with respect to detaching battleships from our fleet for service in Europe was discarded by order of Secretary Daniels. And we find that it was not until after the arrival of Admiral Benson in London in November, 1917, that Rear Admiral Sims was given an adequate headquarters staff and organization and that his important recommendations not only as to antisubmarine warfare but as to thorough cooperation with the Allies were carried out. (See ante, pp. 104–108.)

74. From all of the foregoing we find it impossible to avoid the conclusion that many of the delays that occurred on the part of the United States Navy during 1917 and before its forces got thoroughly into the war were due not only to great unpreparedness of its fleet as to material condition and as to personnel but that these delays were due also and more particularly to the policy that Secretary Daniels initially expressed through the Navy Department and thus imposed on the Navy. For we find that his policy did not look to such immediate aggressive participation in the naval war as forcefully as possible and as he was advised officially to do by the General Board, by Rear Admiral Sims, and by the official representatives of the British Admiralty and of the French Navy; but on the contrary we find that his policy sought at first to hold the United States naval forces out of such aggressive warfare and that it took until November, or essentially six months, before his nonaggressive policy had been superseded.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS.

Briefly to summarize the somewhat lengthy findings of the subcommittee, we make the following findings:

We find that Rear Admiral Sims was not only within his rights in writing as he did to the Secretary of the Navy on January 7, 1920, concerning certain naval lessons of the war, but we find also that as Rear Admiral Sims was in a very responsible position during the war and knew that important lessons could be learned through his observations, it was his duty to write as he did, making a frank and confidential criticism to the Secretary of the Navy. We find that his intention in writing the aforesaid letter was to bring about a betterment of conditions in the Navy through calling attention to the mistakes that had been made by the Navy Department during the early months of the war. We find further that Rear Admiral Sims acted with entire propriety in reading his letter of January 7, 1920, to the subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Naval Affairs when he was requested so to do by the chairman of the subcommittee.

Preparedness.—We find that on the very day war broke out in Europe, August 1, 1914, the General Board wrote to Secretary Daniels, urging him to prepare the Navy for war; that nothing was done to follow out the recommendations contained in this letter until, in April, 1916, in reply to a demand from the Senate for the production of the aforesaid communication, Secretary Daniels informed the Senate that the communication did not refer to naval preparedness, whereas in reality it was clearly an official plea for naval preparedness; that until shortly before the entrance of the United States into the war Secretary Daniels opposed the organizing of the Navy Department so that it could prepare the Navy for war and in particular opposed the effective creation of a Planning Division in the Bureau of Operations, and that said Planning Division was not finally organized until some time after the armistice; that the great building program inaugurated by the department in 1916 while admirably adapted to the building up of a permanent Navy did not take into consideration the existing conditions in the European War and did not provide especially for antisubmarine war vessels to be used against Germany. Further, that no especial attempt was made to push the construction for antisubmarine warfare, of the antisubmarine vessels which were included in the 1916 program; that Secretary Daniels also vetoed the urgent request of the General Board for an increase of the personnel of the Navy of 19,600 men in 1915, which veto was at the root of the inadequate manning of our fleet at the time of our entry into the war; that between February 2, 1917, when the United States severed diplomatic relations with Germany, and April 6, when we went to war, Secretary Daniels caused to be put into condition five more battleships and four more cruisers, although of all our 67 destroyers not one was ready to sail instantly for the war zone. Had the efforts of the Navy Department been properly directed, we might have entered the war with more than 50 destroyers in condition for instant service overseas.

Although Secretary Daniels maintained when the United States entered the war that the Navy was ready from "stem to stern," the conclusions from figures made up by the Navy Department itself show that not more than one-third of the vessels of the fleet were in full matériel condition for war service on April 6, 1917, and that it then took from two to six months to put the balance of the fleet in such condition. These same statistics show that little more than one-tenth of the vessels of the fleet were fully manned when the United States entered the war and that it was not until nine months later that all of the remaining nine-tenths of the fleet could be fully manned even with a partially trained personnel; that in short it does not appear that in any important respect, with the possible exception of the capital ships of the first line battle fleet, the Navy was adequately prepared for war, and that virtually all of the witnesses agree that the Navy was far from ready for war in April, 1917.

Conduct of the naval war.—We find that Secretary Daniels was promptly advised by virtually all of the American and British advisors of the critical maritime situation that existed when the United States entered the war, and of the need for an immediate concentration of forces against the submarines in as large force as possible in the critical war zone.

Gen. Pershing's final report makes it very clear that American forces were badly needed in France in 1918 in order to check the German offensive, and that it was the presence of the American Expeditionary Forces in France that made it possible to start the allied counter-offensive which brought about military victory in the following autumn. The report shows that the transportation of the American Expeditionary Forces (and of their essential supplies) to Europe was greatly retarded by the dearth of ocean transport tonnage caused by the German submarine campaign.

We find that to a large degree to Rear Admiral Sims belongs the credit for bringing about the convoy system which proved such a success in protecting our ships from German submarines, and that the Navy Department persisted in opposing this system during the first two months of the war and did not accede to it fully until sometime about the middle of July, 1917. We find that although virtually all naval authorities recommended immediate concentration of antisubmarine forces in the war zone, yet it was not until April 24, 1917, that any antisubmarine craft set sail from the United States to the war zone; and then only six destroyers were so detailed.

We find that about this time the General Board most insistently urged that 200 antisubmarine craft be sent immediately overseas and at the same time pointed out that more than 200 of such craft were available and that there were over 2,000 naval guns available wherewith to arm them. Yet in spite of this recommendation Secretary Daniels so directed the Navy that less than 30 antisubmarine vessels had arrived in Europe by July 1 and only 90 by December 1. In view of the fact that all of these 90 vessels were afloat on April 6, 1917, and that 71 of them were in the United States Navy at the time of the declaration of war, the conclusion appears to be inevitable either that these 71 vessels were not ready for war or that it was not the policy of Secretary Daniels to hasten their arrival in Europe. Secretary Daniels maintains that the Navy was ready from "stem to stern." Whether the arrival of these vessels in Europe was delayed because of unpreparedness or because of the policy of Secretary Daniels, the responsibility would seem to rest with him.

We find that Rear Admiral Sims, who had been Commander of the United States Naval Forces operating in European waters and the representative of the Navy Department at the allied headquarters in London, was not kept properly advised as to the policy of the department or as to the forces being sent him; that his requests for forces which were available or could readily have been made available were not acceded to as readily as they might have been; that his requests remained long unanswered and that he was not provided with an adequate staff to enable him to carry out his important duties.

We find that Rear Admiral Sims's requests for battleships were not acceded to until after a delay of more than eight months; for submarines until after a delay of six months.

We find that this general lack of support on the part of the Navy Department, in view of the fact that Rear Admiral Sims was our commander in European waters and the representative of our Navy Department at the allied headquarters in London, and therefore largely responsible for proposing and carrying out with the allied naval forces all the measures of American naval cooperation in

European waters, greatly embarrassed and delayed his negotiations with the allied naval commanders.

We find that Rear Admiral Sims was justified in opposing the laying of the North Sea mine barrage during the first few months of the war, when the available mines to be used in the barrage were unsatisfactory, and when in the opinion of essentially all experts all effort should then be concentrated actively and offensively against the submarines, which then threatened to cause the collapse of the allied cause before the end of 1917; but we find that when in the autumn of 1917 a new type of mine had been invented, involving the use of 100,000 mines instead of 750,000, as at first contemplated, and when the convoy system had proved that it was getting the upper hand of the submarines, then Rear Admiral Sims advocated and did everything in his power to complete the construction of the great barrage.

We find that substantially all of the recommendations made by Rear Admiral Sims during the first months of our participation in the war were later adopted and put into practice by the department after delays ranging from a few weeks to a year, and that our naval operations during the war were conducted throughout the war in accordance with these recommendations after their adoption. We find that these naval operations made it possible to transport and sustain in France the American Expeditionary Forces; that the transportation of these forces and all the supplies to maintain them was greatly delayed because of the dearth of ocean transport facilities and that this dearth was to a material extent due to delay in putting into prompt effect the recommendations made by Rear Admiral Sims.

As the American Expeditionary Forces shortened the war by making victory possible in the autumn of 1918, and as their arrival in France in overwhelming force was delayed by dearth of ocean transport, due to delay on the part of the Navy Department under Secretary Daniels in putting into effect the recommendations of Rear Admiral Sims, the conclusion seems inevitable that had these delays in naval operations not occurred the American Expeditionary Forces might have brought about an allied victory earlier than they actually did; but the extent to which these delays failed to shorten the war is altogether conjectural.

Policy of the Navy Department.—An examination of the evidence more particularly indicative of the policy of the Navy Department shows that virtually all professional advice called for the immediate concentration of effort against the submarine. Nevertheless Secretary Daniels did not immediately cause such a concentration of effort to be made. On the contrary, both prior to and for many months after our entrance into the war, Secretary Daniels caused the repairing of battleships and cruisers (of little if any avail against submarines) to be carried along with the repairing of the destroyers, which latter were most urgently needed as antisubmarine craft. This repairing of battleships and cruisers unnecessarily delayed the putting in condition of the destroyers and indicates an absence of early intention on the part of Secretary Daniels to concentrate on aggressive antisubmarine warfare.

When the United States entered the war all available destroyers not needed by the battle fleet were ordered to the home patrol fleet. These destroyers being ordered to the home patrol fleet indicates the

reverse of any intention to concentrate destroyers immediately against the submarines. That there was no such intention is also indicated by the fact that no witness was able to show that any general and specific operative plan existed in the Navy Department for antisubmarine warfare.

On April 10 and 11, 1917, allied naval representatives held their first conferences with the heads of the Navy Department and presented a request from the British Admiralty for naval assistance, "especially in antisubmarine craft." Secretary Daniels testified that at the second of these conferences "complete cooperation with the French and British was arranged," and that six destroyers were ordered to go to the war zone. The evidence showed, however, that between April 11 and April 26 no orders were issued even to prepare additional destroyers for service in the war zone, but that between April 26 and May 1 orders were issued to prepare 36 additional destroyers for such service. As between April 11 and the early part of May, both Rear Admiral Sims and the British Admiralty were insistently calling for all possible antisubmarine forces, it is difficult to understand how Secretary Daniels came to state that on April 11 "complete cooperation with the French and British was arranged."

From the fact that having ordered six destroyers to prepare for overseas service on April 11, and from the fact that between that date and April 26 no additional destroyers were ordered even to prepare for service in the war zone, it would seem that Secretary Daniels, having granted the Allies 6 out of our 67 destroyers, then proposed to rest on the intention not to give them any additional antisubmarine assistance in the near future.

Amazing as all this would seem to be, it is explained by the fact that when the Allies made their first appeal on April 10, 1917, for naval assistance and "especially in antisubmarine craft," Admiral Benson met this appeal by the following statement of policy:

Admiral Benson stated that the present policy of the United States was to maintain the fleet intact and to assist in the patrol of the Atlantic and Gulf coasts of the United States and waters adjacent thereto. (See ante, p. 92.)

This policy of self-defense and total abstention from aggressive warfare against the submarines, though modified to the extent of sending overseas 10 per cent of our destroyers, would seem to explain the lack of attention paid to the requests made by Rear Admiral Sims for forces wherewith to conduct aggressive antisubmarine warfare during the first months of our participation in the war.

It is difficult to explain such an entirely nonaggressive policy as Secretary Daniels imposed upon the United States Navy until it is recalled that less than two months before we entered the war President Wilson was trying to get Congress to declare a status of "armed neutrality" whereby our merchantmen might defend themselves by force of arms from aggression of either belligerent though the United States might give no aid to either belligerent.

It is recalled furthermore that it was but four months before we entered the war that President Wilson had officially stated to the world his inability to differentiate between the objectives of the two groups of belligerents. And it is recalled that at as late a date as January 22, 1917, President Wilson had declared his views of "peace without victory," and had stated, in effect, that a victory over